

GENESIS OT eSOURCES COLLECTION

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For my students and students of the Bible
2004**

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Joseph in Egypt

First of Six Parts

by Charles Aling

No portion of the Old Testament has a richer Egyptian coloring than the story of Joseph. Egyptian names, titles, places, and customs all appear in Genesis 37-50. In the last one hundred years or so, historical and archaeological research has made the study of the Egyptian elements in the Joseph story more fruitful than ever before. In order to examine the Egyptological information, it is necessary to establish the period in Egyptian history when Joseph was in Egypt.

Mainline contemporary scholarship and the Bible's own chronology are in accord in dating Joseph sometime between 2000 and 1600 BC. This time frame includes two important periods of Egypt's history, the Middle Kingdom (2000-1786 B.C.) and the Second Intermediate Period (1786-1570 B.C.). However, before narrowing down our dates for Joseph any more, let us first survey these two periods.

The Middle Kingdom was one of Egypt's three greatest ages (Hayes, 1964) (Aling, 1981). The country was unified and prosperous, and was in the process of conquering Nubia, located in what is today the Sudan. In the Bible, this area is called Ethiopia.

The eight Pharaohs of this period comprise Egypt's 12th Dynasty: The founder was the great Amenemhat I (1991-1962 BC). He died by assassination, but not before he had associated his son Sesostris I with him on the throne as co-regent. Sesostris in his long reign (1971-1928 BC) campaigned with success in northern Nubia and built at no less than 35 sites in Egypt.

Under his immediate successors, fighting in Nubia subsided and trade received the main royal attentions. Since Babylon had not yet emerged as a great power under

Hammurabi, Egypt stood alone as the world's greatest nation.

The most important king of the 12th Dynasty was Sesostri III (1878-1843 BC). He renewed the efforts to conquer Nubia, and was successful. All of Nubia as far south as Semnah was taken. Sesostri III also instituted great administrative reforms. He broke the power of the local nobility. These officials had been a thorn in the side of the Pharaohs all through the 12th Dynasty. We know little in detail of what Sesostri III did, but he did end the semi-independence of the so-called Nomarchs (provincial governors). We will have occasion to return to this point later.

Under Amenemhat III (1842-1797 B.C.) the Middle Kingdom reached its highest level of material prosperity. Egypt was very successful in foreign trade. The exploitation of mines and quarries was greater than ever before, and a project to reclaim land in the Faiyum region to the west of the Nile valley was completed.

The final rulers of the Twelfth Dynasty (including one female king) were weak. As central authority broke down, so did control of Egypt's borders with Syria-Palestine. This enabled an ever-expanding infiltration of Asiatics to enter Egypt's delta region. Eventually these Asiatics were able to seize control of northern Egypt, thus ending the Middle Kingdom period of Egyptian history.

The Second Intermediate Period, or as it is sometimes called, "the Hyksos Period," was not a time of greatness for Egypt. The north was controlled by Asiatics, a group called the Hyksos by the Egyptians. The south was ruled by local Egyptian dynasts of no great power or importance, at least in their early years. [The best study of the Hyksos is John Van Seters, *The Hyksos* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966).]

A few comments on the Hyksos are necessary here. There are several wrong views concerning them which have become popularly held. The first is that they entered Egypt by means of a massive military invasion led by chariots. While the Hyksos

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probably did introduce the war chariot to Egypt, they most certainly did not enter the country and conquer it in a military campaign. They entered the Nile delta gradually and, finding themselves there in sufficient numbers to do so, simply established one of their leaders as an Egyptian-style Pharaoh. They resided in a capital city called Avaris; later in Egyptian history this city would be re-named "Ramses" after the great king Ramses II (1290-1223 BC).

Another misconception about the Hyksos concerns their name. Josephus, a Jewish historian writing in the first century AD during the days of the great Jewish Revolt against the Roman Empire and Rome's armies led by Vespasian, said that the term "Hyksos" meant "Shepherd Kings." This is of course quite wrong. The name Hyksos comes from two Egyptian words meaning "Rulers of Foreign Lands," and has nothing at all to do with shepherds.

The final incorrect idea regarding the Hyksos is that they ruled all of Egypt. They did not. They only controlled the delta region, at least for any length of time.

During which of these two periods of time did Joseph come to Egypt as a slave? It has become fashionable among scholars to date him to the Hyksos period, since it is generally assumed that the Israelites were fellow Asiatics related to the Hyksos. It is also assumed that, since Joseph eventually rose to a high position in the Egyptian court, the king must have been a fellow countryman of Joseph's. If we allow for a sojourn of some 400 years in Egypt by the Israelites, and if we accept the so-called Late Date of the Exodus (in the middle 1200's BC), a date for Joseph around 1650 BC would be perfect.

The Bible, on the other hand, provides us with some very specific chronological data regarding these events. I Kings 6:1, a pivotal reference for all Old Testament chronology, dates the Exodus 480 years before the fourth year of Solomon, accepted by virtually all scholars as 966 BC. This places the Exodus in ca. 1446 BC; a date which agrees with the so-called Early Date for the Exodus. Next, Exodus 12:40 states that Jacob came to dwell in Egypt 430 years before the Exodus. Thus he came to Egypt in ca. 1876 BC. These Biblical references clearly show that Joseph ought to be dated in the Middle Kingdom rather than in the Hyksos Period.

Several specific points in the Joseph story confirm a Middle Kingdom rather than a Hyksos date for Joseph. In Genesis 41:14 Joseph is called out of prison to meet with the king. Before going to meet the king, Joseph puts on new (clean) clothing and shaves himself. This becomes understandable when we realize that the Egyptians were a clean people and were particularly offended by facial hair.

This verse points to the Pharaoh being a native Egyptian, and not Hyksos. The latter, being Asiatics, were not bothered by facial hair and a general lack of cleanliness. When Joseph is rewarded and promoted by the Pharaoh for interpreting the king's dream, he is named to be ruler over all the land of Egypt (see Genesis 41). The Hyksos never ruled all the land of Egypt, but the native Egyptian Pharaohs of the Middle Kingdom did.

Also, when Joseph is given a wife by the king as a reward for his interpretation of the dream, the woman is said to

be the daughter of Potiphera, Priest of On. On was the center of solar worship in ancient Egypt. The chief god worshiped there was Re or Ra, the northern manifestation of Amon-Re, the supreme deity of both the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom periods of Egyptian history.

The Hyksos, while they did not persecute the worshippers of Re, did not give that deity the number one position. Their favorite deity was Set, a delta god sometimes regarded by the Egyptians as nearly a devil-like figure. The Hyksos identified Set with the Palestinian god Baal, a god from their Canaanite homeland who was very familiar to them.

Now if Joseph was being rewarded by a Hyksos king, it stands to reason that his new wife would not have been the daughter of a priest of Re, but rather the daughter of a priest of Set. Once again, the Middle Kingdom seems a better choice for dating Joseph than the Second Intermediate Period. Thus, relying on the Biblical chronology and the historical material, we will place Joseph in the Middle Kingdom Period, under two great rulers, Sesostri II (1897-1878 BC) and Sesostri III (1878-1843 BC).

Joseph entered Egypt as a slave. It is interesting to note that slavery was not a very old concept in Egypt. It had not existed earlier in the Old Kingdom, the period when the great pyramids were being built. Those structures were not, as is sometimes stated, built by slave labor. They were constructed by drafted peasant labor.

The Middle Kingdom is the first major period in Egyptian history where slavery was well known. In the 1950s AD, the American Egyptologist William C. Hayes published a famous papyrus document from the Middle Kingdom which had a list of slaves on one side and a discussion of Egyptian prisons on the other (Hayes 1972). In the next issue of *Bible and Spade*, we will examine the information this valuable papyrus provides for us regarding the story of Joseph.

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Joseph in Egypt

Second of Six Parts

By Charles Aling

Joseph began life in Egypt as a slave (Gn 39:1). As we saw in Part I of this study, these events in the life of Joseph should be dated to the great Middle Kingdom period of Egyptian history (2000-1782 BC).

It is important to note that during the Middle Kingdom, slavery as an institution of society flourished in Egypt. Evidence from Egyptian texts, indicates that at this time in Egypt's history, the number of Syro-Palestinian slaves in bondage in the Nile Valley was growing constantly (Aling 1981: 30, note 14). While some of these Asiatic slaves must have been prisoners of war captured by the Egyptian army in raids to the north, the majority certainly were not obtained by violence (Aling: 30). Most of the slaves were female; prisoners of war would have been predominantly male. Also, there are no Egyptian records of any major wars being fought by Egypt in Syria-Palestine in the Middle Kingdom. It is best to conclude that most of the Asiatic slaves entered Egypt just as Joseph did, through the slave trade. This, however, brings up an interesting question: why is there no written evidence at all of a slave trade between Syria-Palestine and Egypt?

First, let it be said that dismissing something on the basis of a lack of evidence is a dangerous business. Today, we have very few of the written documents composed in the Ancient Near East. What we have reflects accidental preservation. And, when we realize that the slave trade would have centered in the Nile Delta (northern Egypt), accidental preservation becomes even less likely due to the high water table there. Very few papyrus documents have been recovered from that region, especially from the earlier periods of Egyptian history. Also, the slave trade would have been in all probability in private hands rather than under government control. This

would have made preservation of documentary evidence even more remote. Lastly, it is very possible that the slave trade would have been in the hands of foreigners rather than Egyptians, as the Bible implies in the case of Joseph. Records in so far as they were kept at all, would thus not be kept by Egyptians but by the

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Asiatics who were selling other Asiatic men and women to the Egyptians.

We are fortunate to have a papyrus from the Middle Kingdom that deals with slaves. This papyrus was studied and published some years ago by the American Egyptologist William C. Hayes (Hayes 1972). We will have occasion to refer to this remarkable document in the next issue of *Bible and Spade*, since the reverse side of this same papyrus contains a discussion of Egyptian prisons, another topic of vital importance for the Joseph story. But this papyrus' main significance lies in its list of Middle Kingdom slaves with names, nationality and titles or jobs held by these slaves. The list contains 95 entries. Of the 95 slaves listed, about 30 can be identified as non-Egyptian, either by their non-Egyptian names or by the designation "name", meaning an Asiatic (Hayes: 92).

Two things of great interest emerge from a study of the Asiatic slaves on this list. First, the names are very significant to the student of the Bible. Several of them are either identical to or very similar to some names familiar to us from the Old Testament itself. A female version of the Hebrew name Menahem is present; Sk-ra-tw, also the name of a woman, is paralleled by the Hebrew name Issachar; Ashra is most certainly the feminine version of Asher; and Shepra is known to us in the Old Testament as Shiphrah, the Hebrew midwife in the Book of Exodus (Hayes: 95-96). Secondly, the duties assigned to the Asiatic slaves in our list provide some important correlations to Joseph's career. The kinds of jobs performed by the Asiatic slaves are generally less onerous than those assigned to native Egyptian slaves, and are in fact classifiable as skilled labor (Hayes: 93). Let us examine some of the titles held by the Asiatic slaves.

One of the most common titles held by male Asiatic slaves was that of "Household Servant" (Hayes: 103 ff). This is not only a confirmation of the accuracy of Scripture, which assigns this title to Joseph, but also helps us to get

a better idea of what kinds of work Joseph would have been involved in while a slave of Potiphar. When we examine Egyptian monuments that picture or discuss household servants, we find that such slaves performed the normal kinds of tasks we would expect. For example, they are often shown in tomb paintings bringing food and drink to their masters (Hayes: 104). An Asiatic slave could also be a cook, a teacher, or a brewer (Aling: 35).

A final fact to note from Hayes' papyrus is that slaves in the Middle Kingdom were commonly owned by private individuals. It has always been known that the governments of the Near East were owners of large numbers of slaves, many of whom would have been used in the vast construction projects of the state such as temple building, palace repair, and the construction of fortifications. It may be assumed that slaves would also have been employed as laborers on both the large agricultural estates of the king and of the temples. But here, in the papyrus published by Hayes, we have evidence (p. 134) that officials of wealth and standing also could own slaves. The Potiphar of Genesis must have been such a man.

Joseph's entire life and career were indeed remarkable. As the Bible repeats again and again, the Lord was with Joseph and blessed what he did. God's blessing was, in fact, so obvious that Joseph's Egyptian masters were able to recognize it! (Gn 39:3) We find in Genesis 39:4 that Potiphar, Joseph's first Egyptian master, promoted Joseph from being merely a household servant to become his steward, the one over his household. What did this entail? From the far better documented New Kingdom period of Egyptian history (1570-1085 BC), we have information on the duties of the steward (Aling: 35-36). Under Mery, the High Priest of the god Amon for King Amenhotep II, a man named Djehuty served as steward. Two of his subsidiary titles were "Scribe of Offerings" and "Chief of Agricultural slaves." The first proves that he was literate,

and the second shows us his primary duty, the supervision of his master's agricultural estates. Several other stewards known from New Kingdom times had the same titles. This indicates two things about Joseph. First, he was literate. He would have to be to hold a stewardship. How and when he learned to read and write the complex Egyptian language is not known. Perhaps it was when he was a household servant of Potiphar. In any case, we may assume that Joseph was a quick and diligent student. Secondly, as a steward, Joseph would have been in charge of the agricultural holdings of his master, Potiphar. We should remember that ancient Egypt did not have a money economy as we know it today, and officials such as Potiphar would have been paid for their work by being allowed the use or ownership of farmlands. Potiphar would not have the time or perhaps even the skills to supervise the land and its cultivation himself; hence the necessity for a steward. We remember too that Joseph came from an agricultural family, and presumably already had extensive knowledge of farming techniques and farm animals.

From a practical point of view, there are two reasons why it is important for the modern student of the Bible to realize all this about Joseph. First, through a knowledge of what an Egyptian steward did, we can see the accuracy of the book of Genesis, even in minute details. Note for example Genesis 39:5. At the end of this verse, we are told that Potiphar's holdings were blessed for Joseph's sake, both in the house and in the field. When we understand that Joseph was a steward, and when we learn what kinds of things a steward did in both the house and the field, we have a far clearer appreciation of this verse and what it is telling us. Second, when we see that Joseph was an Egyptian steward, we see him getting the kind of on-the-job training he would need for the ultimate task God had for him, the task of preserving the people of Israel during the coming time of great famine. As we will see in a later article, Joseph will eventually become the head of agriculture for the entire land of Egypt. Under Potiphar, he received vital experience on a smaller scale for the far

greater responsibility he will have later. He was faithful over a small job; God would therefore give him a more important one (Lk 16:10).

In our next article, we will find Joseph in prison. This same papyrus published by Hayes will give us much information on this aspect of the life of Joseph.

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Joseph in Egypt

Third of Six Parts

By Charles Aling

As all who are familiar with the Biblical account will remember, Joseph, while still in the household of Potiphar, was falsely accused of adultery with the wife of his master and thrown into prison. The normal punishment for adultery in ancient Egypt was death; the fact that Joseph did not suffer execution is interesting and perhaps indicates that Potiphar doubted the veracity of his wife, who had made the accusation. In any case, Joseph spent time in an Egyptian prison.

The Biblical mention of Joseph serving time in a prison is noteworthy in itself. To us in the 20th century, serving time in a prison as punishment for a crime seems quite natural. But in the ancient world, this was not the case. The death penalty, a fine, or even bodily mutilation were the usual means of making people suffer for their crimes in the ancient Near East.

Prisons were rare in the ancient world. To see this, one need only look at the Old Testament Law. There is nothing there about serving a prison sentence for any sin or crime, and in fact there is nothing Biblically or archaeologically that would lead us to believe that the Hebrews even had prisons as we know them. The importance, then, of the prison sentence of Joseph is that the author of the book of Genesis is recording correct information, for Egypt was one of the few nations in the ancient Near East that had prisons in the classical sense of the term.

We are very fortunate to have an Egyptian papyrus, translated and published by the Egyptologist W. C. Hayes, that deals at length with Egyptian prisons (Hayes 1972). We have mentioned it also deals with Asiatic slaves in Middle Kingdom Egypt. Let us look at what this papyrus tells us about prisons and prison life in Egypt in the days of Joseph (Hayes 1972: 37-42).

The main prison of Egypt was called the "Place of Confinement." It was divided into two parts: a "cell-block" like a modern prison, and "a barracks" for holding a large number of prisoners who were forced into serving as laborers for the government. What kinds of sentences were given to prisoners? We know little about specific sentencing procedures. It does not seem that criminals were given a number of years to serve in prison. Perhaps all sentences were life sentences. In any case, some of the prisoners in the Place of Confinement were "serving time" for their crimes, as Joseph presumably was. Other

prisoners, however, were simply being held in prison awaiting the decision of the government as to what their punishment was to be. In other words, they were waiting to find out if they were going to be executed. This last category seems to be that of the two individuals Joseph met while in prison, the Butler and the Baker.

Who were the two individuals? We are never told their names or their crimes. The fact that one, of them, the Baker, was eventually executed, and the other, the Butler, was restored to office, leads us to believe that they were accused of being involved in some kind of plot against the king. Such things happened in ancient Egypt. In such a case, once the king sorted out the facts, the guilty would be punished and the

innocent would be exonerated. The Baker was executed (for treason) and the Butler was restored to his position. But what was that position?

We get the term "butler" from the KJV translation of the Bible, and it brings to our minds the very British concept of a man in a tuxedo who answers doorbells and supervises household servants. This does not reflect the situation in the Joseph story. The Hebrew title is "Cup Bearer" (for a Middle Kingdom example, see Vergote 1959: 50). The duties of this personage involved providing beverages to the king; hence we see the importance of having someone trustworthy on the job.

Getting back to the prison itself, let us see what else the Hayes papyrus tells us about it. The main prison was located at Thebes (modern Luxor) in Upper Egypt, some 400 mi south of the Nile delta and modern Cairo. Assuming Joseph was there and not at some smaller prison (a correct assumption I believe since key royal officials were imprisoned there too), we see that the entire Joseph story cannot be confined to the delta area of the Nile as some scholars would have us believe.

As the Genesis account states, there was a "Warden" or "Overseer of the Prison," who was assisted by a large staff of clerks and scribes. Record keeping at such an institution was as important to the ancient Egyptians as it is in a modern prison. The actual title Overseer of the Prison is not commonly found in Egyptian inscriptions, but examples do exist from the Middle Kingdom, the time of Joseph.

One of the chief assistants to the Warden or Overseer was the "Scribe of the Prison." In Genesis 39:22 we are told that Joseph was promoted to high office in the prison. Since Joseph was literate, as we have seen from the fact that he served as steward in the household of Potiphar, it seems probable that he was promoted to Scribe of the Prison. As such, he would not only have been the right-hand man of the Warden, but he also would have been in charge of all the records of the institution.

No matter how high in rank he became, Joseph naturally would have valued his personal freedom more than a high office in the prison. When he interpreted the dream of the Cup Bearer as meaning that the Cup Bearer would be freed and restored to his post, Joseph implored that individual to remember him when he has the ear of Pharaoh. The Cup Bearer promises to do so, but quickly forgets Joseph when he assumes his old position again. It is only when Pharaoh himself dreams a dream that the Cup Bearer remembers the young Hebrew who could, through the power of God, interpret dreams. At that time, Joseph is called out of prison.

One final point needs to be noted. Joseph, before going to the king, has to change his clothing and shave (Gn 41:14). These are significant details. Native Egyptians were very concerned about personal cleanliness and the removal of all facial hair--the beards worn by kings were false beards. If Joseph appeared before a Hyksos, i.e. non-Egyptian Pharaoh, these factors would not have been so significant. It is likely

that the ancient Hyksos were Amorites, and we have ancient pieces of art indicating that the Amorites grew beards. This verse, therefore, is further evidence that the Pharaoh of Joseph's day was Egyptian and not Hyksos, and that Joseph is correctly dated to the Middle Kingdom period.

In our next article we will examine Joseph's encounter with Pharaoh, a real turning point in the career of the Biblical Patriarch.

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Joseph in Egypt

Fourth of Six Parts

By Charles Aling

In Genesis 41, Joseph meets the king of Egypt. As we saw in our last article, he had been prepared for this encounter by being cleaned up and shaved, in true Egyptian fashion. He was now ready to meet the most powerful and important man on earth. Before we consider this meeting however, a word on the title Pharaoh is necessary. This term means literally "Great House," and refers to the palace establishment of Egypt. As the years passed, the title "Pharaoh" began to be used when speaking of the king, the main inhabitant of the palace and the head of Egypt's government.

If we date Joseph to the Middle Kingdom period of Egyptian history, as I believe it is correct to do, an apparent problem arises. At this early stage of Egyptian history, the title Pharaoh was not used to refer to the king in direct address; such use begins only in Egypt's powerful 18th Dynasty in about 1400 BC, some 300 years after the time of Joseph.

We must remember, however, that Joseph did not write the account we have in Genesis; Moses did. Moses of course lived much later than Joseph, in about 1400 BC. During his time, the title Pharaoh was beginning to be used as a form of direct address for the king of Egypt. It is important to note that Moses does not use Pharaoh followed by a proper name. This practice was only instituted in the late period of Egyptian history, as is correctly reflected in Jeremiah 44:30, where "Pharaoh Hophra" is mentioned.

But let us turn to the events surrounding the actual meeting between Joseph and the king, most probably Sesostri II of Dynasty 12. As all of us will recall from our own study of the

Scriptures, Pharaoh had had a dream. His magicians (the Hebrew in Genesis 41 is an accurate translation of the Egyptian word for a magician) could not tell the meaning of his dream.

At this point, the Butler (Cupbearer) remembered his friend Joseph from prison days who had interpreted his dream and that of the Baker. Joseph's interpretation of their dreams had come true. This was the man to send to the king to interpret his dream. Pharaoh's dream, itself full of Egyptian coloring, predicted according to Joseph's interpretation that Egypt would experience seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine.

The years of plenty would of course cause no problem; but in a country dependent on agriculture, seven years of famine could spell disaster. The Pharaoh is then offered sage advice by Joseph: find a man to supervise Egypt's produce during the seven good years. He should put aside one fifth of the produce of the seven good years for distribution during the seven bad years.

In Genesis 41:39, two remarkable things take place. First, Pharaoh acknowledges that God (singular) has revealed all this to Joseph. He must have been told this fact by Joseph himself. It is interesting that this man of God was not afraid to give credit to the Lord even while speaking to a pagan king who was considered to be a god on earth by his people. This shows solid faith and remarkable courage on the part of Joseph. Second, Pharaoh realizes that Joseph has the Lord's wisdom and appoints him to be the one in charge of Egypt's agricultural production during these important years.

After all of this takes place, a very significant scene is described. In Genesis 41:40-45, Joseph is appointed to high office in Egypt and is given several rewards--a ring, a gold chain, new linen robes, a chariot, an Egyptian name, and a wife. The interpretation of this scene has created a good deal of controversy among scholars. Traditionally, the entire scene has been taken to represent some kind of investiture ceremony. Joseph is named to high position, and is given the trappings of high office.

[graphic] Pharaoh gave Joseph "Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife" (Gn 41:45). Little remains at On (called Heliopolis by the Greeks) except for this lone obelisk. A grand temple to the Egyptian god Re stood here in Joseph's day.

This interpretation is, however, certainly wrong. The Egyptologist Donald B. Redford in his study of the Joseph story examined all known scenes in Egyptian tomb paintings where individuals are given gold chains (Redford 1970: 208 If). In the 32 known paintings of this event, not one has anything to do with induction into high office. They all, on the other hand, show an individual being rewarded for service rendered. Redford uses this information to deny the accuracy of the Biblical account. We do not agree with him on that point, though.

What is happening in these verses is a two-fold ceremony. In verses 40-41, Pharaoh officially appoints Joseph to high office in Egypt (in our next article, we will try to establish exactly which Egyptian titles Joseph held). However, in verses 42-45, Pharaoh rewards Joseph for what he has revealed.

Let us look at how Joseph was rewarded. Of the three items of personal adornment mentioned, the gold chain is by far the most important. As Redford has pointed out, this is a common item in reward scenes in Egyptian tomb paintings (most of the examples come from the New Kingdom period, somewhat later than the days of Joseph). While the ring and the linen robes are not prominently mentioned in Egyptian reward scenes, the gold chain catches our attention because one would not expect an Egyptian reward ceremony to occur without it. This again indicates the accurate Egyptian nature of the details of the Joseph Story.

Joseph's new chariot is also of special interest (Aling 1981: 44-45). As a vehicle for war, the chariot seems to have only been introduced into Egypt during the Hyksos period, 1786-1570 BC. This would be, according to the dates calculated from the Bible itself, too late for Joseph. There is, however, nothing strange about the Egyptians having a few chariots for high officials to use in the Middle Kingdom period when Joseph lived. In this passage of Scripture we are not looking at war chariots lined up for battle in some anachronistic way. In fact, the implication of the Biblical text is that there- were not many chariots in Egypt at this time. Joseph's chariot is called "the second chariot," implying that the only person who outranked him, Pharaoh himself, had the other.

What of Joseph's new name? Unfortunately, scholars are uncertain about the Egyptian original for the Hebrew version Zaphnath-paaneah (Kitchen 1996; Redford, 1970: 230-31). Identification of the Egyptian name of Joseph would be of great interest, since some of the viziers of the Middle Kingdom period are known to us. Our small sample of names, though, probably does not include Joseph's.

Joseph also was granted a wife. The woman's name was Asenath, which is a good Egyptian female name of the period. We know little of her, other than her name and the name of her father. Knowing Joseph, however, we must assume that he taught her to have faith in the true God of Heaven, despite her pagan background.

But who was her father? The Bible gives us several tantalizing facts about the man. He is called Potiphera. This is a variant of the name Potiphar, the only other male named in the Joseph Story. As we all recall, Potiphar was Joseph's former master. In both cases it is likely that we are not dealing with a personal name at all. Such a grammatical construction of a name, meaning "the

[graphic] Pharaoh had Joseph "ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and men shouted before him, "Make way!" (Gn 41:43). Golden state chariot from the tomb of Tutankhamun, ca. 1325 BC.

one given by Re (the Sun god)," would only be possible in the later periods of Egyptian history. It would also be strange to have two men named who have virtually the same name, while none of the kings is named. It seems most likely that the two men involved are not actually being referred to by name, but that we are being told that they were native Egyptians.

We are also told that the father of Asenath was a priest. This in itself is not terribly significant, other than to show that Joseph was being highly favored since priests were at the pinnacle of Egyptian society. What is important is the further information we are given in Genesis 41:45. Asenath's father was Priest of the city of On. On was known to the Greeks as Heliopolis, and was the center of worship of the sun god Re. It was also the educational center of ancient Egypt. The High Priest of the god Re at that city was a key figure in Egyptian religion and politics.

That Joseph married the daughter of a priest of Re at Heliopolis is important as confirmation of our date for Joseph in the Middle Kingdom and not in the Hyksos period as so many scholars wish to do. His marriage must be regarded as a high honor, as it is part of the rewards given him for what he has done. It thus stands to reason that the priest of On and his god Re were highly favored by the Pharaoh at that time.

Under the Hyksos, the god Re, while not being persecuted as was once thought by some scholars, was certainly not the main god: For the Hyksos the god Set, a Nile delta deity often equated with the Canaanite god Baal, was number one. If Joseph dates to the Hyksos period, we would not expect to find Re being so important. That Joseph marries a daughter of the Priest of Re is evidence for his belonging to a period of history when native Egyptian kings ruled in Egypt, not Hyksos foreigners.

In our next article, we will examine the titles Joseph held in the Egyptian government.

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[graphic]Artist's reconstruction of the entry facade of the Temple of Re at On. Joseph's father-in-law was a priest at this temple and Joseph's marriage to his daughter no doubt had political ramifications.

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Joseph in Egypt

Fifth of Six Parts

By Charles Aling

The specific Egyptian titles granted to Joseph by Pharaoh have been discussed at great length by modern scholars. The key verse is Genesis 45:8, which mentions three titles held by Joseph. The Hebrew text of course does not give the Egyptian form of these three titles. Hence, years of scholarly debate have arisen over the exact Egyptian renditions of the Hebrew words or phrases.

Of the three titles that Joseph held, let us begin with the one obvious title, and then move on to the two more complex and problematical titles.

Lord of Pharaoh's House

Genesis 45:8 states that Joseph was made Lord of all of Pharaoh's House. This title has an exact Egyptian counterpart, which is normally translated into English as "Chief Steward of the King."

The main job of the Chief Steward was the detailed supervision of the King's personal agricultural estates, the number of which would have been vast. This fits well with Joseph's advice regarding the coming years of plenty and the following years of famine. As Chief Steward, Joseph would be well placed to prepare for the coming famine during the years of more abundant production.

It is interesting to observe that another specific responsibility of the Chief Steward was to take charge of the royal granaries, where the agricultural wealth of the nation was stored. As the person in charge of these great storehouses, Joseph was ideally placed for carrying out his suggestion to store food during the good years for the bad.

On the practical side, two things can be learned from Joseph's post as Chief Steward. First, note how God had prepared him for his task. No one starts out in life at the top of the ladder. We all must learn the ropes, so to speak, from the ground floor up. Joseph had been steward of the estates of Potiphar. This job was very much like that of Chief Steward of the King, but on a much smaller scale. Joseph without doubt received

on-the-job training as Potiphar's steward, which stood him in good stead when he later was promoted to the same job in the King's household.

As Potiphar's steward, Joseph did his job faithfully. We are told that all that Potiphar owned prospered under the stewardship of Joseph. Joseph evidently learned well. He was therefore

ready when the Lord allowed him to become Chief Steward for all of Egypt.

A second point is also worth mentioning. As Chief Steward of the King, Joseph was perfectly placed to care for God's Chosen People during the famine. As Genesis 45:7 tells us, God put Joseph into this position in order to save the Patriarchal family. It is almost certain that Joseph did not know this at the time of his appointment, but God had plans for him. And, in the same way, wherever God places us, He may have a major task for us to do later. Like Joseph, we should do the best we can at whatever task He gives us, so that we will be ready when called upon later.

Father to Pharaoh

Genesis 45:8 also calls Joseph "Father to Pharaoh." Of course, this does not mean that Joseph was the physical father of the King of Egypt. There was no blood connection between the two men. Pharaoh was an Egyptian; Joseph was a Hebrew. Even if we assume, as many scholars do, that the Pharaoh in the Joseph story was a Hyksos king, there is no reason to suspect any blood relation between the two men. Dismissing that possibility, what then does the phrase "Father of Pharaoh" mean?

Father of Pharaoh, or more literally "father of the God" (the Egyptians believed their kings to be divine), had a variety of meanings in ancient Egypt. One was as a term for the tutor of the King during the ruler's childhood. In Joseph's case this is not likely. He had never met the King until called out of prison to interpret the royal dream. Nor does the Bible ever suggest that Joseph held such a post.

Another way the title was used was as a designation for an individual whose daughter became a wife of the reigning king. In other words, "Father of the God" meant "father-in-law." Again, we may dismiss this meaning for Joseph's title. The Bible says nothing about Joseph having any daughters, let alone daughters who married the King of Egypt.

Yet another usage of the title was as a designation for minor priests in Egypt's complex state religion. Again, this does not seem even a remote possibility for Joseph. He was never a priest in ancient Egypt, and as a servant of the true God, he would not have such an office.

A last use of the title "Father of the God," however, makes more sense for Joseph. The Egyptians used this title as a special honor given to officials who had served long and well, or who had done the King some special favor. Joseph would easily qualify for the title Father of the God when used in this way; in fact, this is the only usage that makes sense. Joseph would have been named Father of the God for interpreting the dream of the King, and for suggesting a plan for Egypt to get through seven terrible years of famine.

Ruler Throughout all the Land of Egypt

Joseph's third possible title is more controversial, and merits a more extended treatment. The basic question is whether Joseph ever became Vizier, or Prime Minister, of Egypt.

Genesis 45:8, by calling Joseph "Ruler of all Egypt," seems to suggest that he became the Vizier of Egypt. And, when Pharaoh promoted and rewarded Joseph, he said that only as King would he be greater than Joseph. But the modern scholar William Ward has argued that Joseph never became Vizier (Ward 1960: 144-50). Ward states that Hebrew phrases such as those mentioned above are not specific equivalents of the Egyptian title of Vizier, but are rather only renditions of vague Egyptian epithets given to other, lesser, officials.

However, Joseph obviously held only one of the vague epithets discussed by Ward and that epithet was "Chief of the Entire Land." While Ward is correct in stating that this epithet was at times used for officials of lower rank, it was most commonly used for Viziers. And, for the phrase in Genesis 41:40, "Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you," no exact Egyptian parallel exists. The Hebrew text strongly suggests that Joseph became the Vizier of Egypt.

Assuming that Joseph was indeed Vizier, what were his duties?

There are Egyptian inscriptions that describe the duties of the Vizier of Egypt. Although such inscriptions are much later than Joseph's time (they date from the New Kingdom), several texts exist which describe in great detail the duties and powers of the office of Vizier.

The Vizier was the chief record keeper of the government records, was the supervisor of the government in general, appointed lower officials of government to office, controlled access to the person of the Pharaoh, and generally supervised construction work and industry in Egypt's state-run economy (Aling 1984: 49). More pertinent to Joseph, the Vizier also

was in charge of agricultural production, just what he needed to care for God's people in the time of famine.

Also, another power held by the Vizier has great interest in regard to the Joseph story. Only the Vizier welcomed foreign embassies coming into Egypt. So, when Joseph's brothers came to Egypt for food, they would normally meet with the Vizier. And, Joseph is the man they met (Gil 42).

It is also interesting that in referring to Joseph, the brothers normally call him "the man." This is perhaps a play on words since the Egyptian word for man and the Egyptian word for Vizier are only one letter different.

The positions of Vizier and Chief Steward of the King were both very high posts in the government of Ancient Egypt, even as far back as the Middle Kingdom. It is reasonable to ask if there are any known officials with these titles that could have been Joseph. The answer is no, at least at the present time. One problem is that we know comparatively few Viziers and Chief Stewards from the Middle Kingdom. Also, another major obstacle is that we do not know the Egyptian form of Joseph's name, only the Hebrew.

There is, however, one fact of interest that we know about Middle Kingdom Viziers. It is rare in the early part of the Middle Kingdom period to find one person holding both the title of Vizier and the title of Chief Steward of the King. But, from the time of Sesostri II of the Middle Kingdom, we do find examples until the end of the 12th Dynasty. It is possible that Joseph broke new ground in this regard, being the first person to hold both positions at the same time.

The Seven Years of Famine

As for the seven years of famine, no contemporary Egyptian record of this famine exists. But from a later time, when Greek kings ruled Egypt after Alexander the Great's conquest of Egypt, there is an Egyptian text which mentions a seven-year famine, but dates it to the reign of King Djoser of the Old Kingdom.

One wonders if this is a garbled memory of the famine in Joseph's day, simply re-dated to the reign of a more famous king. Confirmation of such a theory is nearly impossible, but it is interesting to speculate about. In our next article in this series we will consider some final aspects of the Joseph story.

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Joseph in Egypt

Sixth of Six Parts

By Charles Aling

We do not know how many years Joseph served as Egypt's Vizier (Prime Minister). It is very interesting that he evidently held two key titles, Vizier and Chief Steward of the King. This is relatively unusual in Egyptian history.

Significantly, the best known examples come from the Middle Kingdom, exactly the period of Joseph's career. While none of officials holding these two posts can be identified with Joseph, it is probable that he was the first to do so and set a precedent.

Two deaths are recorded near the end of the Book of Genesis, that of Jacob and of Joseph himself. Both men were embalmed, or mummified. Today, the popular view is that this was a mysterious process about which we know little or nothing. Such is not the case. With the large number of mummies preserved in museums, we would be poor scientists indeed if we could not reconstruct this procedure. What then were the basics of mummification? (see Adams 1984, and on the popular level, Davis 1986)

Two things were essential to the mummification process. First, the body was dried. A great deal was accomplished in this regard by the naturally dry climate of Egypt. I remember seeing a photograph of a Roman soldier who had died in Egypt and who had been buried in the sand without any kind of embalming treatment at all. His hair was well preserved, as were his teeth, and there was a good deal of skin remaining, too. The Egyptians aided this natural drying process, however. They packed the body with a powdery substance called natron (basically sodium carbonate and sodium bi-carbonates). This chemical is found naturally in several locations in Egypt (Lucas 1962: 263ff).

It is important to realize that a liquid solution was not used, but rather that the body was packed in this dry powder for a period of many days. The exact length of time in the natron varied according to which period of Egyptian history the mummy belonged and according to the amount being spent on the process. Presumably, a rich family would spend more on preserving their family members.

A second thing necessary for mummification was the removal of the vital organs of the body. If these are left inside the person, they will speed decay. Thus, the Egyptian embalmers removed all of the abdominal organs except the heart, and also removed the brain.

This last procedure created a problem, however. The Egyptians were concerned about the body retaining its identity, and they did not want to harm the head or face in any way. They resolved this problem by unraveling and removing the brain through the nose with a sharp hook of some kind. Gruesome as this may sound, it worked rather well. After their removal, some of the organs were wrapped and placed inside containers in the tomb with the mummy. It was expected that they would be needed for a happy life in the next world!

There were of course, certain religious ceremonies that went along with the mummification process. Joseph, I am sure, would not have wanted any of these done for him, and, if he had any say in the matter, they were not done. But, after all this was accomplished, the body would be skillfully wrapped in spiced linen and placed in a coffin.

Next, the mummy would be entombed. In Joseph's case, instructions had been left to remove him from Egypt when his family went out of that land. It is, therefore, useless to look for the grave of Joseph in Egypt, since his body left Egypt at the time of the Exodus.

A final observation on Joseph's life and career: According to Genesis 50:26, Joseph was 110 years old at the time of his death. This age is interesting, since in ancient Egypt 110 was considered the perfect age at which to die (Aling 1981: 51, note 25). What happened to the Jewish people after Joseph's death? At first nothing happened. In the early verses of Exodus chapter 1, however, we see that a king rose up who knew nothing of Joseph. This personage was, I believe, a Hyksos Pharaoh.

The Hyksos were a foreign people from Syria-Palestine who ruled the northern portions of Egypt in the so-called Second Intermediate Period, ca. 1786-1570 BC.

That this king was a Hyksos is shown by a number of things. The Hebrew of Exodus 1:8 indicates a negative kind of rulership. Also, Exodus 1:9 states that the king had a fear that the Hebrews would outnumber his people. It is not realistic to believe that the Jews would ever become more numerous than the native population of Egypt; but they certainly could outnumber a ruling minority like the Hyksos.

Finally, in Exodus 1:11 we are told that the Hebrews, as slaves, labored at two cities: Pithom and Ramses. Pithom is not located yet with certainty, and is in any case not important for our discussion here.

But Ramses was the great delta capital under the Hyksos first and then later under King Ramses II of the 13th century BC. In Dynasty 18, ca. 1570-1325 BC, little or no major work went on there.* It seems certain, then that the Hebrews worked at Ramses during the Hyksos period.

The bondage of God's people lasted for many years. Joseph's accomplishments were forgotten for the time being, but were remembered and recorded in Jewish records, were to be written of by Moses, and were also to be rehearsed by uncounted generations to come.

As Joseph was not forgotten by the Jewish people, he is not forgotten by us. It is hoped that these brief articles have helped to make him a real person, set against the background of Egyptian history and civilization.

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ADAM AND ADAPA: TWO ANTHROPOLOGICAL CHARACTERS

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Because of the enormous impact of the Bible upon both the Jewish and Christian communities, any ancient Near Eastern literary discovery that may offer a parallel to some segment of biblical literature is greeted with interest. One such literary discovery is the Adapa myth. Its early discoverers and investigators claimed it as a true Babylonian parallel to the biblical story of Adam.¹ However, after the initial flush of excitement, other voices arose to point out the differences between Adam and Adapa, claiming that no parallels exist between them.² This position is retained in some of the more recent examinations of the material, but with the provision that some of the issues raised in the Adapa myth also occur in the biblical material.³ Finally, renewed attempts at showing an essential parallel between Adam and Adapa (with due allowances for functional shifts in the material) have been made.⁴ Such a "seesaw effect" of ancient Near Eastern parallels to the Bible is quite typical and suggests that the word "parallel,"

¹ See conveniently the discussion by A. T. Clay, *The Origin of Biblical Traditions*, Yale Oriental Series 12 (New Haven, (cnin., 1923), pp. 108-116.

² This reaction is well illustrated by A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*, 2d ed. (Chicago, 1951), p. 12-1: "The Adapa legend and the Biblical story (of Adam) are fundamentally as far apart as antipodes." This general conclusion had been anticipated by G. Furlani, "Il mito di Adapa," *Rendiconti della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*. Classe di scienze, etc. 6/5 (1929): 113-171.

³ See, e.g., B. R. Foster, 'AVisdom and the Gods in Ancient Mesopotamia,' Or, n. s., 43 (1974): 352-353; E. A. Speiser, "The Idea of History in Ancient Mesopotamia," in *Oriental and Biblical Studies* (Philadelphia, 1967), p. 310, n. 96; G. Buccellati, "Adapa, Genesis, and the Notion of Faith," OF 5 (1973): 61-66; P. Xella, "L'inganno' di Ea nel mito di Adapa," *Oriens Antiquus* 12 (1973): 265.

⁴ Recently W. H. Shea, "Adam in Ancient Mesopotamian Traditions," AUSS 15 (1977): 27-41; reprinted in Bible and Spade 6 (1977): 65-76.

though difficult to replace, may be inappropriate and quite inadequate to take account of the complex relationships that exist between biblical and extrabiblical literary traditions.⁵ It is the purpose of this essay to address that problem with specific reference to the Adapa myth.

1. Adapa and the Suggested Parallels with Adam

The Adapa myth tells a simple story about a wise man, Adapa, in the city of Eridu in southern Mesopotamia.⁶ He was created by Ea (Sumerian Enki), the god of the great deep and of the world of man, and served the city of Eridu and its temple with great devotion by, among other things, providing fish. Once a sailing mishap on a fishing expedition made him curse the south wind, thereby breaking its wing, whereupon the land was deprived of its cooling and moist breezes. For this offense he was summoned to the high god Anu (Sumerian An) to give account of his deed. First, however, he received this advice from his god Ea: (1) to appear in mourning garb at the gate of Anu so as to receive sympathetic assistance from the two heavenly gate keepers, Tammuz and Gizzida (vegetation gods); (2) to refuse the bread and water of death offered to him, but to accept oil for anointing himself and new garments. With this advice, which he followed carefully, Adapa succeeded admirably in his heavenly audience (to Anu's surprise), whereupon he was returned to earth (for he was but a man) with forgiveness for himself, release from feudal obligations for his city (Eridu), and healing for the illness which his offense had brought upon mankind.

Now we can turn to the so-called "parallels" between this story and the biblical story of Adam, notably Adam's fall (Gen. 3).

⁵ S. Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1962): 1-13, warned against it. See now also W. W. Hallo, "New Moons and Sabbaths: A Case Study in the Contrastive Approach," *HUCA* 48 (1977): 1-18.

⁶ The best English translation is by E. A. Speiser in *ANET*, 101-103. Of the four extant fragments, three (A, C, D) derive from the Ashurbanipal library (7th cent. B.C.), and the fourth (B) comes from the Amarna archives (14th cent. B.C.).

(a) The name Adapa has a tantalizing similarity to that of Adam, a fact that has led to the suggestion that a simple phonetic development may explain their relationship, i.e., a labial shift from *m* to *p*, rather than vice versa.⁷ Moreover, the final ending *a* in Adapa also appears in the Hebrew '*adama*, meaning "ground"/"soil." Finally, *a-da-ap* is reported by E. Ebeling to occur in a syllabary text with the meaning "man."⁸ Whatever the merit of these linguistic considerations, the etymology of Adam is itself uncertain. Is it "soil"/"ground," ('*adama*) or "red" ('*edom*), or "blood" (*dam*)?⁹ As for the name Adapa, it appears frequently with the epithet "the learned, the wise,"¹⁰ and is in fact now known to be the name of the first of the seven antediluvian sages (*apkallu*),¹¹ each of whom is associated with an antediluvian king.¹² Adapa is identified as the one who ascended to heaven, following the account of our myth in a text published by E. Reiner,¹³ who on the basis of the epithets *apkallu* and especially *ummanu* has

⁷ See Shea, pp. 38-39.

⁸ See ANET, p. 101, n*, where reference is given to Ebeling's *Tod and Leben*, 27a.

⁹ TDOT, 1: 75-79. The name *adamu* (syllabically spelled) is now reported to have been found on the Ebla tablets as the name of a governor of that city (see M. Dahood, "Ebla, Ugarit, and the Old Testament," *The Month*, 2d, n.s. 11 [1978]: 274). From the same city a calendar with the month name ^d*a-dam-ma-um* has appeared (see G. Pettinato, "Il Calendario di Ebla al Tempo del Re Ibti-Sippis sulla base di TM 75.G.427," *AfO* 25 [1976]: 1-36). W. H. Shea, who kindly drew my attention to this item, has presented a discussion of the calendar in question in *AUSS* 18 (1980): 127-137, and 19 (1981): 59-69, 115-126. Also the Sumerian *a-dam* (pasture) may offer an opportunity to speculate upon the etymology of *Adam* (see W. W. Hallo, "Antediluvian Cities," *JNES* 23 (1970): 58. Taken at face value, the Genesis account would appear to tie *Adam* to '*adama* (ground), from which the man was taken and to which he will return.

¹⁰ See ANET, 313-314, 450; A. K. Grayson, "The Weidner Chronicle," *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, Texts from Cuneiform Sources 5 (New York, 1975), 147: 33; Foster, pp. 344-349.

¹¹ *Apkallu*, "wise man, expert, sage," refers to the seven antediluvian sages and is an epithet of Adapa. *CAD*, A/11, 171-172.

¹² See T. Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List* (Chicago, 1939): Hallo, p. 62.

¹³ "The Etiological Myth of the 'Seven Sages,'" *OrNS* 30 (1961): 1-11.

concluded that Adapa is to be identified as a "master craftsman" with reference to the scribal arts, hence a vizier.¹⁴ W. G. Lambert, however, has argued on the basis of another text that the epithet of Adapa should be read *umanna*, and that its determinative produces a double name, Uman-na-Adapa,¹⁵ which was transferred into Greek as the Oannes of Berossos.¹⁶ In fact, he suggests that *adapa* functioned as an epithet of Uman-na (Oannes) with the meaning "wise."¹⁷ Since, however, this likely represents a secondary development of the meaning of this word, it consequently does not answer our question about etymology. At any rate, some etymological relationship between Adam and Adapa now seems likely, although any original meaning behind them both is not thereby elucidated. The functional meaning of Adam, namely "man" (*homo sapiens*), may take us as closely as we can get to the names of our characters.

(b) Both Adam and Adapa were apparently tested with food (and drink, in the case of Adapa); and, according to some interpreters, both failed the test, hence the parallel between the two accounts. But whether Adapa in fact failed is a moot question. It would mean that he failed unwittingly by completely obeying his god Ea in refusing the bread and water of death, which actually turned out to be emblems of life. Ea, in turn, would have to be understood as deceiving Adapa by keeping divinity from him (making him refuse the heavenly food) for a selfish reason, namely that he wanted to retain the service of Adapa in Eridu.¹⁸ However,

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 8-9.

¹⁵ "A Catalogue of Texts and Authors," *JCS* 16 (1962): 64.1.6; and p. 74. See also W. W. Hallo, "On the Antiquity of Sumerian Literature," *JAOS* 83 (1963): 176.

¹⁶ See the edition by F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* 3/C (Leiden, 1958): 369-370.

¹⁷ See W. G. Lambert, "Three Literary Prayers of the Babylonians," *AfO* 19 (1959-60): pp. 64, 72, n. 72; "A Catalogue of Texts and Authors," p. 74.

¹⁸ Thus E. Burrows, "Note on Adapa," *Or*, no. 30 (March 1928), p. 24; T. Jacobsen, "The Investiture and Anointing of Adapa in Heaven," *AJSL* 46 (1930): 201-203 (reprinted in *Towards the Image of Tammuz* [Cambridge, Mass., 1970], pp. 48-51); *The Treasures of Darkness* (New Haven, Conn., 1976), pp. 115-116; J. Pedersen, "Wisdom and Immortality," *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, ed. M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas (Leiden, 1955): 244; Foster, p. 351; Shea, p. 34.

this interpretation of the matter has met with some challenge from investigators who have warned against introducing into the myth the familiar concepts of temptation, deception, and fall.¹⁹ Another suggestion has it that Ea gave Adapa the best advice he knew regarding the bread and water, and that Adapa followed it obediently. This would imply that Ea underestimated the willingness of Anu to receive and pardon Adapa and hence unfortunately, unnecessarily, and perhaps unwittingly warned his protege about the presumed dangerous bread and water of heaven.²⁰ But this explanation, as W. H. Shea rightly points out,²¹ is weakened by the fact that Ea everywhere appears as the god of wisdom, cleverness, and cunning, and that indeed at the very moment of giving his advice Ea is introduced as "he who knows what pertains to heaven."²²

A possible solution to this problem (i.e., how can wise and cunning Ea fail so miserably with his advice or be so deceptive with his favorite son?) would be that once again Ea was indeed right with his advice,²³ that the bread and water of life would in fact become bread and water of death to a mere mortal,²⁴ and that the unpredictable element in the Adapa crisis was Anu, who turned

¹⁹ See, e.g., F. M. Th. Bohl, "Die Mythe vom weisen Adapa," *WO* 2 (1959):418; B. Kienast, "Die Weisheit des Adapa von Eridu," *Symbolae Biblicae et Mesopotamicae*, F. M. Th. Bohl Festschrift (Leiden, 1973), p. 234; G. Komoroczy, "Zur Deutung der altbabylonischen Epen Adapa and Etana," *Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der Alten Welt I*, ed. E. C. Welskopf (Berlin, 1969), p. 38.

²⁰ Thus Komoroczy, 39; S. N. Kramer, "Mythology of Sumer and Akkad," *Mythologies of the Ancient World*, ed. S. N. Kramer (Garden City, N.Y., 1961), p. 125.

²¹ Shea, pp. 33-34.

²² *ANET*, p. 101.

²³ Ea (Enki) traditionally helped gods and humans in crisis situations. He restored Inanna from the underworld, reviving her with the water and grass of life (see T. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness*, p. 58). He successfully warned Ziusudra/Utnapishtim about the coming flood and assured the survival of mankind (*ibid.*, p. 114; *ANET*, p. 93). He averted a rebellion among the lower gods by proposing and arranging the creation of man (W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atra-Hasis* [Oxford, 1969], p. 55). He solved the crisis caused by Apsu's rage by cleverly placing a spell over him and having him killed (*ANET*, p. 61).

²⁴ "Für den Sterblichen rind Nektar and Ambrosia Gift," Bohl, p. 426. Also cf. Kienast, pp. 237-238; Buccellati, p. 63.

the tables on Ea in the matter of the food and who, by laughing at Adapa (B, line 70; D, line 3), showed himself to be the real culprit.²⁵ In any case, the meal may not at all have been intended as a sacred investiture of Adapa into divinity,²⁶ but merely a meal provided in response to the requirements of hospitality.²⁷ But can a mortal accept such hospitality (including a robe and oil) to the extent of sharing the ambrosia and nectar with Anu? If this interpretation is at all correct, the heavenly food may at one and the same time be food of life and food of death, depending upon the one who eats it. A similar duality may be reflected in the biblical picture of the two trees: one of life, leading to eternal life (Gen 3:22); the other of knowledge, presumed to offer godlikeness, but actually leading to mortality (Gen. 3:3-5; 2:17).²⁸

²⁵ Though Anu represents the highest authority in the world, he is not nearly so resourceful and calm as is Ea. A case in point is Anu's reaction to Adapa's offense: "'Mercy!' Rising from his throne: '(Let) them fetch him hither!'" (*ANET*, p. 101). Again, he was apparently unable to face the threat of Tiamat (*ANET*, p. 63). Also, the Atra-Hasis myth finds him unable to propose a solution to Enlil's problem, namely, a rebellion among the lower gods (Lambert and Millard, *Atra-Hasis*, pp. 49-55). In general, Anu appears less resourceful and predictable than Ea, like a weak and insecure chairman of the board!

²⁶ Thus Burrows, p. 24. The idea is that Anu, impressed with Adapa's power and skill, decided to include him among the gods—an old illustration of the maxim: If you can't beat them, join them (or make them join you).

²⁷ Jacobsen, "The Investiture and Anointing of Adapa in Heaven," pp. 48-51.

²⁸ According to Gen 2:9 the tree of life stood in the midst of the garden as did also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Gen 3:3 locates the forbidden tree in the midst of the garden, but does not otherwise name it, whereas Gen 3:22 speaks of the tree of life from which man must now be kept. Concerning the two trees, located at the same place, man is forbidden to eat from one, never commanded to eat from the other, but subsequently hindered from reaching it. The tree of life (plant of life) occurs relatively frequently in ancient Near Eastern literature (B. S. Childs, "Tree of Knowledge, Tree of Life," *IDB* 4, 695-697), the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is practically unknown outside Genesis (see, however, M. Tserat, "The Two Trees in the Garden of Eden," *Eretz-Israel* 12 [1975]: 40-43). It is tempting to suppose that this "double tree" in the midst of the garden indicates two postures that man can take: (1) He can eat of one (presuming to be a god) and die, or (2) he can refuse to do so (remaining human), but staying alive with access to the other tree. He cannot eat from both.

From this it would follow that Ea's advice to Adapa, which proved valuable in every other respect, must also be taken in this sense with reference to the heavenly food. Ea does not deceive Adapa to keep him mortal and in his service in Eridu. He saves his life from what ordinarily would mean certain death through a presumption to be a god. If this is correct, the alleged parallel between Adapa and Adam over failing a test involving food falls away, but another emerges: Both were subject to a test involving food and both received two sets of advice; namely, "do not eat" (God and Ea) and "eat" (serpent and Anu). One, Adapa, obeyed and passed his test; the other, Adam, disobeyed and failed. But even this situation is complicated by a further consideration; namely, the relationship between obedience/disobedience and immortality.

(c) It is frequently suggested that Adapa, like Gilgamesh, sought immortality, that his visit before Anu was ill-fated by depriving him of his nearly realized quest (thanks to his blind obedience to Ea's deceptive advice), and that the Adapa myth is an etiology explaining human mortality.²⁹ However, Adapa did not possess immortality originally (A, line 4);³⁰ and no absolute proof exists that he sought it, but was hindered by Ea's schemes.³¹ Not even Anu's laughter and Adapa's return to earth, which is recorded in the late fragment D,³² necessarily implies forfeited immortality on the part of Adapa. Instead, it may indicate Anu's amused satisfaction over Adapa's wisdom and loyal obedience, which enables him to refuse that heavenly food, the acceptance of which would be an act of *hybris*. Hence he is rewarded with life on earth, rather than with punishment by death.³³ At the most, the myth

²⁹ Foster, pp. 352-353; Bohl, pp. 416-417.

³⁰ The fundamental distinction between gods and men in the ancient Near East is precisely the inability of the latter to achieve immortality (with the exception of Utnapishtim, the hero of the Flood). Yet even the gods are not unalterably immortal, for they too depend upon eating and upon care and are vulnerable before a variety of adverse circumstances. Cf. Bohl, p. 426.

³¹ Recently Komoroczy, p. 38.

³² It comes from the Ashurbanipal library and is attributed to an Assyrian scribe. For the relationship between this fragment and the main fragment B (from the Amarna archives) see Bohl, pp. 427-429.

³³ See Kienast, pp. 237-238; Komoroczy, pp. 38-39.

affirms that immortality is the privilege of the gods and cannot belong to man, even to the wisest of all.³⁴ Here is a direct contrast between Adam and Adapa: Adapa is restrained by Ea from seeking immortality (presumptuously or even accidentally) in the court of Anu; Adam is restrained (unsuccessfully) from losing it. However, once Adam has lost his immortality, he too must be kept from seeking it anew (Gen 3:22f).

(d) Adam and Adapa are both summoned before the divinity to give account of their actions. Adam's offense is clearly that he broke the prohibition regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, with the implication that in grasping for this knowledge he aspired for divinity.³⁵ But what is Adapa's offense? On the basis of the presumed parallel with Gen 3, the answer has often been that like Adam so Adapa offended (unwittingly) in the matter of eating (and drinking), except that Adapa declined to eat where Adam declined to avoid eating.³⁶ However, Adapa's non-eating can hardly be considered an offense at all, except possibly an offense by Ea to which fate made Adapa a party.³⁷ If, on the other hand, the offense is defined as that which brought about the summons before the divinity, then Adapa's offense was clearly breaking the wing of the south wind. Three things may be observed concerning this act. First, Adapa broke the wind with a word. He clearly was in possession of magic power,³⁸ something which may explain the incantation in fragment D employed to dispel illness. Second,

³⁴ Foster, p. 353.

³⁵ The term "good and evil" is generally understood to mean "everything," and seeking such knowledge represents human *hybris*. See J. A. Bailey, "Initiation and the Primeval Woman in Gilgamesh and Genesis 2-3," *JBL* 89 (1970): 144-148. But see also B. Reicke, "The Knowledge Hidden in the Tree of Paradise," *JSS* 1 (1956): 193-201; R. Gordis, "The Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Old Testament and the Qumran Scrolls," *JBL* 76 (1957): 123-138.

³⁶ See Shea, p. 39.

³⁷ The role of fate appears to be prominent in some Mesopotamian traditions, perhaps because the gods were not always partial to virtue, but took advantage of it. Cf. Foster, p. 352.

³⁸ Thus Jacobsen, "The Investiture and Anointing of Adapa," pp. 50-51; Foster, p. 349.

Adapa issued the curse while fishing in the service of the temple of Eridu, that is, while performing his religious duties. His anger over capsizing is directed not against his god Ea, who sent him out to sea, but against the wind that blew over his boat. In other words, he broke the wind in his eager devotion to Ea, possibly not counting the consequences vis-a-vis the land.³⁹ Third, in breaking the wind, Adapa seriously disturbed the land (the world of southern Mesopotamia), and hence its high god Anu, who had authority over its maintenance. By maiming the south wind, Adapa halted the cooling life-giving breezes from the sea, leaving the land exposed to the scorching sun. G. Roux found in this condition an explanation of the presence of Tammuz and Gizzida (both fertility gods) at Anu's door.⁴⁰ They suffered the lack of the fertile, moist wind and had sought help from Anu, who in turn inquired about the situation and upon being told cried, "Mercy!" (B, line 13) and sent for Adapa. It would also explain Ea's advice to Adapa that he approach the gate where the fertility gods were waiting, in mourning (over their miserable condition) so as to express his contrition and gain their sympathy and help. In that, Ea and Adapa were eminently successful. This success is indicated by Adapa's recognition before Anu, his acceptance of the signs of hospitality,⁴¹ which, very much to Anu's astonishment,⁴² he knew how to receive while discreetly refusing that to which he was not entitled (the heavenly bread and water). At this point a clear contrast with the story of Adam emerges, for excuses and a self-defense, not contrition and obedience, characterize Adam's confrontation with God.

³⁹ See Kienast, p. 237.

⁴⁰ G. Roux, "Adapa, le vent et l'eau," RA 55 (1961): 13-33. That only seven days are involved does not speak against this conclusion (thus Foster, p. 352), for the story is a myth in which realities are stylized into symbols.

⁴¹ Here I follow Jacobsen ("The Investiture and Anointing of Adapa," pp. 48-51; *The Treasures of Darkness*, p. 116) against Burrows ("Note on Adapa," p. 24). Adapa is not being invested as a heavenly being (only to lose it all by refusing his meal). Rather he is being accepted and forgiven of his offense, thanks to his contrition, caution, and the good offices of Tammuz and Gizzida.

⁴² According to fragment B, Anu laughs and says, "Take him away and return him to his earth" (B, line 70). The later Assyrian scribe responsible for fragment D

(e) Although Adapa, unlike Adam, is not the first man on earth, he does represent mankind in a special sense. According to fragment A, line 6, he is a "model of men," a human archetype; and as B. R. Foster suggests, this particular aspect of Adapa's character identifies him as a wise man whose abilities extend in several directions.⁴³ First, he is a sage whose superior knowledge given him by Ea makes him general supervisor of human activities in the city of Eridu. He bakes, cooks, prepares the offering, steers the ship, and catches the fish for the city (A, lines 10-18). Second, he is a vizier to the first antediluvian king, Alulim.⁴⁴ Thus he is the first *apkallu* (antediluvian wise man) and as such is identified with the Oannes of Berossos,⁴⁵ about whom it is reported that he daily ascended from the sea in the form of a fish and taught mankind the arts of civilization.⁴⁶ Third, Adapa is wise in scholarship, having authored a literary work (unknown except in this fragmentary text).⁴⁷ In consequence of these characteristics, Adapa became the epitome of wisdom and a model of it to later generations.⁴⁸ When this fact is combined with his association with the first king, he is the typical man, even the primal man. Although unlike Adam, he is not the first man, still he is a sort of prototype, so that the matters pertaining to all mankind are explicable in reference to him (as, for instance, is apparently the case with regard to mortality, as portrayed in this myth). What Adapa does, or what he is, has consequences for subsequent generations of mankind, not because he passed on to them some form of original sin, but because through his wisdom

offered this added explanation by attributing the following words to Anu: "Of the gods of heaven and earth, as many as there be, who (ever) gave such a command, so as to make his own command exceed the command of Anu?" (D, lines 5f.). Anu is surprised that his ruling in the matter had been anticipated and met with such a wise response—perhaps a little annoyed, as well, at being found out!

⁴³ Foster, pp. 345-349.

⁴⁴ Hallo, "Antediluvian Cities," p. 62; Lambert and Millard, *Atra-Hasis*, p. 27.

⁴⁵ See above, p. 182.

⁴⁶ Jacoby, pp. 369-370.

⁴⁷ Lambert, "A Catalogue of Texts and Authors," p. 70.

⁴⁸ See n. 17, above; also Xella, "L'inganno' di Ea nel mito di Adapa," pp. 260-261.

he was chosen to establish the context within which subsequent generations of mankind must live. Here a parallel as well as a contrast between Adapa and Adam emerges. Both are primal men, but the heritage which each one passes on to subsequent generations varies considerably.

2. Contrasts Between Adapa and Adam

From considerations such as the foregoing, it can only be concluded, so it would seem, that although the stories of Adapa and Adam exhibit some parallels (notably in regard to the name and primal position of the two chief characters), they also reveal important contrasts. Therefore, those interpreters who insist upon reading the Adapa myth without assistance from the familiar categories of Gen 3 do make an important and necessary point. The story of Adapa is a myth (or legend) set in the earliest time (antediluvian) of southern Mesopotamia, and it intends (perhaps in a somewhat whimsical way) to give expression to certain distressing situations. The most immediate of these concerns is human mortality. The response of the myth is that man cannot gain immortality, for that is the exclusive prerogative of the gods. Even Adapa, the foremost among men, after whom all mankind is patterned--with all his wisdom, skill, and power--cannot achieve it. Immortality, therefore, cannot be had by humans; it belongs exclusively to the gods, who alone are the ultimate rulers of the universe.⁴⁹ Yet, the alternative to immortality is not death, but life on earth--temporal and subject to the fickles of fate, but not without satisfactions. To this life Adapa is returned, a wiser man who is aware of the distance between heaven and earth. "As Adapa from the horizon of heaven to the zenith of heaven cast a glance, he saw its awesomeness" (D, lines 7-8).

But more importantly, the myth concerns itself with human authority, even arrogance, before the gods. Here the myth is ambivalent. Obviously, Adapa's authority is being curtailed, for he

⁴⁹ Foster, p. 353. This point is made most forcefully in the Gilgamesh epic, during the conversation between Utnapishtim and Gilgamesh (Tablet XI; *ANET*, 93-96).

is summoned to give account of his action; but his wisdom, obedience, and cunning is such that he gets away with more than we would expect. He obtains a reception, life, and some trophies. This is possible because the gods, though immortal, are themselves vulnerable. They depend upon Adapa's provisions for the temple and are subject to his rash breaking of the south wind, thereby throwing the whole land into disarray. The liberation given to Eridu (D, line 10) may be a recognition of the fact that there are limits to the gods' dependence and reliance upon mankind.⁵⁰ That the myth thereby becomes an exaltation of Eridu⁵¹ does not seem entirely persuasive.⁵²

However, just as the world of the gods is vulnerable, so is the world of humanity. The myth ends with a reference to illness which could permanently terminate even the limited and temporal existence of mankind. The healing promised through an appeal to the goddess Ninkarrak (D, lines 17-18) is appropriately attached to the myth of Adapa's successful confrontation with the gods. Just as the wing of the south wind, and hence life in land and city, can be healed, so also can human illness,⁵³ through a proper relationship with the gods, who are both the rulers of the world and its providers of life.

In short, the myth of Adapa is an attempt to come to terms with the vicissitudes of human life, as it exists, by insisting that so it is ordained. It suggests that by wisdom, cunning, humility, and

⁵⁰ This appears to be an issue in the Atra-Hasis flood story. The high gods set mankind to work in order to appease the low gods; subsequently mankind rebels and by its size frightens the high gods into sending a flood, whereupon they suffer from the lack of mankind's service. See Lambert and Millard, *Atra-Hasis*. The suggestion that the flood represents a disruption identifiable as an overpopulation problem only underscores the fact that the gods are vulnerable before their creatures and unable to control their own solution to their problem (see T. Freymer-Kensky, "The Atrahasis Epic and its Significance for our Understanding of Genesis 1-9," *BA* 40 [1977]: 147-155).

⁵¹ Thus Komoroczy, pp. 39-40.

⁵² "Nicht die Stadt, sondern der Mensch and sein Erleben stehen im Mittelpunkt," so Kienast, p. 235.

⁵³ That it refers only to the healing of broken shoulder blades or arms, viz. the broken wing of the south wind, is not likely. For this suggestion see Bohl, p. 428.

obedience human beings can receive (or extract, if needs be) from the gods, who too are vulnerable, whatever concessions, short of immortality, will make life meaningful and satisfactory.

Gen 2-3, on the other hand, seeks to explain why existing conditions are what they clearly ought not to be. Therefore, Adam, unlike Adapa, is not struggling with distressing human problems such as immortality, nor is he strapped down with duties of providing for city and temple, nor is he caught up in the tension between his obligations to his God and hindrances to such obligations arising from an evil world⁵⁴ or from inner wickedness.⁵⁵ He is a natural creature whose simple lack, loneliness, is met in a fully satisfactory and permanent way (Gen 2:20-24). The only other potential difficulty in this harmonious existence lies in his capacity to disobey his God.

Moreover, not only in his existence before God, but also in his confrontation with God does Adam differ from Adapa. That confrontation arises from an experience of weakness in yielding to temptation, not from blind devotion, as in the case of Adapa. Also, Adam fails to manifest contrition similar to that of Adapa. And finally, again unlike Adapa, Adam refuses to take responsibility for his deed; he hides from it and subsequently blames his wife. Adam's fall is therefore much more serious than Adapa's offense, perhaps because of the considerable height from which Adam tumbled.⁵⁶ Both the height of his former position and the depth of his present one are not parallel to those experienced by Adapa.

Even the nature of the relationship between man and God is different in Gen 2-3. God is not vulnerable before Adam, yet he

⁵⁴ For a discussion of these common human tensions, see W. Eichrodt, *Man in the Old Testament*, SBT 4 (London, 1951), pp. 51-66.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 66-74.

⁵⁶ Contrary to J. Pedersen ("Wisdom and Immortality," p. 245), the fall of Adam thus does not parallel the experience of Adapa before Anu. To be sure, both Adam and Adapa made approaches towards divinity by means of wisdom, but Adapa did so from the position of human inadequacy. Adam, on the other hand, suffered no such lack. He enjoyed a relationship with his God through filial obedience and was in possession of all wisdom (cf. Gordis, "The Knowledge of Good and Evil," p. 125).

appears hurt by Adam's fall and takes action in Adam's behalf (cf. Gen 3:21). Adam, on the other hand, is dependent upon God, but appears to ignore that fact (cf. Gen 3:8).

In short, then, we conclude that parallels do indeed exist between Adam and Adapa, but they are seriously blunted by the entirely different contexts in which they occur.

3. Analysis of the "Seesaw" Parallelism

How, then, shall we explain this "seesaw" parallelism? Does Adapa represent a parallel to the biblical Adam, or should Adam and Adapa rather be contrasted? The suggestion of this essay is that in Adam and Adapa we have the representation of two different anthropological characters, perhaps capable of being illustrated by an actor who plays two distinct roles, but who is clearly recognizable in each.

The Adapa character assigned to this actor is suitable for its cultural milieu. It is that of a wise man. The epithet *apkallu* supports it, and his identification with Berossos' Oannes confirms it. His wisdom is ordained by his god Ea, and it comes to expression in the devotion and obedience with which he conducts his affairs. Adapa is not a "sinner," but a "perfect man." He is therefore a model man, arising from the sea, like Oannes, to instruct mankind. He is a human archetype who compares best to such biblical personalities as Noah, Joseph, Moses, Job, and Daniel, who are also models of wisdom, devotion, and obedience, and who represent ideals to be imitated.⁵⁷ Naturally, inasmuch as Adapa lives in a polytheistic world, so he must contend with all its conflicting interests. These are not unlike the conflicting interests with which biblical man is confronted, except that the perpetrators in the latter case are humans. For man to survive in such a world takes wisdom, integrity, reliability, devotion, and humility before the unalterable superiority of the divine powers. But the ideal human character can succeed in this. He may not achieve all that

⁵⁷ Cf. Foster, p. 353; Speiser, p. 310. According to Buccellati, p. 65, Adapa is characterized as a man of faith, and hence he can be compared to such biblical personages as Noah and Abraham. The notion of faith emerges in Adapa's total commitment to his god's counsel. See also Xella, p. 260.

he desires; he remains mortal and shares in the suffering to which humanity is liable, but he does stand to gain real satisfactions from his life and can attain to a noble status and enjoy divine recognition. Here is a clear parallel between Adapa and certain OT ideals, particularly in the wisdom literature.

The Adam role, however, is that of the first man, who is sinless and destined to immortality--of one who, even though a created being, is in the image of God and who enjoys his presence continually. We very much suspect that the same actor is indeed playing, because of the similarity of the names of our characters, because of their primary position among the antediluvians, and because of certain distinct experiences they had in common (e.g., a summons before divinity, and a test involving food). But the precise role which Adam plays is foreign to the Mesopotamian literature. Unlike Adapa, Adam, though made of clay, originally has the potential for immortality and is totally free before God. Further, Adam serves the earth, rather than temple. Moreover, although he possesses enormous wisdom (so as to name the animals, Gen 2:20), he is not portrayed as a teacher of civilization to mankind. Rather, he exists above and before civilization, in a pristine state of purity, nobility, and complete harmony. Furthermore, his confrontation with God is not in sorrow or mourning, comparable to the experience of Adapa; he is subsequently brought low while blaming his misadventures upon a woman. In this, Adam is clearly not an ideal to be followed, but a warning to all--a failing individual, rather than a noble, heroic one. Here a clear contrast emerges between our two characters.

According to an old proposal,⁵⁸ recently resurrected,⁵⁹ the actor who played these two characters--the noble Adapa and the ignoble Adam--was brought to the ancient Near East by west Semitic peoples. On the scene staged by the Mesopotamian artists he characterized man as the noble, wise, reliable, and devoted, but humble, hero who is resigned to live responsibly before his god. However, in the biblical tradition, the characterization came through in quite a different way, which has put its lasting mark

⁵⁸ By A. T. Clay, *The Empire of the Amorites*, Yale Oriental Series 6 (New Haven, Conn., 1919); also, *The Origin of Biblical Traditions*.

⁵⁹ See the recent suggestions by Shea, pp. 39-41; Dahood, pp. 271-276.

upon the concept of man in the Judeo-Christian tradition--namely, that before God, man is (or rather has become) basically sinful, failing, ignoble and untrustworthy, bent upon usurping the place of his God. This portrayal, to be sure, is not meant to reduce the spirit of man to pessimism and despair, but to remind him that despite all the wisdom, cunning, reliability, and devotion of which he is capable and is duty-bound to exercise, he is also always a sinner whose unpredictability, untrustworthiness, and irresponsibility can never be totally ignored nor denied.⁶⁰

Does the Adapa myth then present us with a parallel or a contrast to the story of Adam? The best answer to this question may well be that Adam and Adapa represent two distinct characterizations of human nature. The parallels we have noted in the accounts may suggest that the two characterizations have a common origin, whereas the contrasts between them may indicate that two branches of Near Eastern civilization took clearly distinguishable sides in the dialogue over human nature. Yet these lines are not so different that the resulting two characterizations of man are unable to dialogue.

⁶⁰ It would seem that W. Brueggemann, *In Man We Trust* (Atlanta, 1972), pp. 44-45, takes this aspect too lightly. He correctly observes that the purpose of the fall narrative is not "to dwell upon failure," but to affirm and reaffirm God's trust in man. But he further states, "The miracle grows larger, for Yahweh is willing to trust what is not trustworthy. The gospel out of the tenth century is not that David or Adam is trustworthy, but that he has been trusted" (ibid., p. 45). This is surely good theology, but it hardly succeeds in refurbishing man, as Brueggemann would have us do. The story of Adam's fall, it seems to me, insists that even at its best, mankind is not as good as it ought to be or as we might wish it to be.

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Biblical Perspectives on the Ecology Crises

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INTRODUCTION

Is There a Crisis?

Professor Kenneth Hare of the University of Toronto recently answered the question¹ by dividing people and publications into 3 categories. First, and perhaps most vocal today, are the alarmists, many of whom are profiting immensely by writing and speaking on a kind of apocalyptic level, who see the technological society as having created a monster which, if unchecked, will swallow up both man and nature within a few short years. Hare suggests that much of this group's concern is with what he calls "nuisance pollution", i.e., the kind of thing like cloud or smog factors created by man in a city resulting in a slightly decreased aesthetic or comfort state, but hardly a major threat to life.

A second group consists of those who attempt to debunk the whole pollution effort. There is still land for more people, there are still many resources for development, and we have always been able to develop new methods and resources when the old were exhausted. After all, when coal supplies ran short, we hardly noticed the loss. Why not recognize that new forms of energy, new synthetic materials for construction, new ways of increasing our ability to feed ourselves, and new social structures making it possible for even greater,

numbers to live on this planet are all just around the corner?

In a third group (the golden mean) Hare places himself. His concern is with what he calls "transcendent" pollution--i.e., the relatively few but vitally important factors that affect not one area but the entire ecosphere. In such a category he would include the population explosion, the problem of non-renewable resources, and the problem of atmospheric and water pollutants now present in the world-wide system of the earth's surface. It is not my purpose to referee this debate. Rather, I should like to suggest that, whatever our view of the seriousness of the problem, there is an area in which we must develop a response. Even the most optimistic 'de-bunker' of the ecology crisis is functioning on the basis of a philosophy--usually a philosophy built on an unlimited confidence in man and his ability to control his own destiny. And, because our response inevitably involves values, and values in our Judeo-Christian society have always related to Biblical religion, I feel we can and should begin our search for a value-structure at that point. Especially for us, as evangelicals, there is a mandate for a fresh look at our sources, partially because they are under attack in ecological circles, but more basically because we purport to find in them "all things necessary for life and godliness".

What then does the Bible say to guide our response to the problems of ecology? Does it speak with a clear voice in favor of concern or does it, perchance, leave us in the embarrassing position of 'drop-out' from the company of the concerned, or worse yet, does it provide us with a mandate for exploitation of the worst sort? To these questions my paper will attempt an answer.

Approach to the Crisis: Ecological or Theological?

Perhaps at this point we should pause to consider the criticism of the "theological strategy" offered by

Prof. Richard Wright in a recent article.² Dr. Wright suggests that an "ecological strategy" (i.e., educate people to see that a proper use of their environment is beneficial in terms of their own quality of life) is more effective than a theological one, as Christian churches have neither the ability to agree on a particular theological strategy, nor the ability to influence the secular majority in our society. The theological approach must be, therefore, merely a supplement to the more pragmatic, realistic appeal to self-preservation which secular man can understand.

I question whether one can separate the two, even to the limited extent proposed by Dr. Wright. If ecological decisions are to be made at all they must be made in the context of a human value system. Who is to say that self-preservation is a strong enough motive for action, especially when, for those in affluent parts of the world, it usually is a problem of assuring the next generation's survival not our own? What will convince the consumer of wood and paper, the traveler in his fume-spewing automobile, or the land-speculator protecting his investment that to modify his behavior severely is necessary? I suggest that a theological conviction, though traditionally limited in its appeal, may make more sense in the context of an increasingly apocalyptic debate than even the appeal to an enlightened self-interest. Though we may never convert the world, we may, as Christians, better set our own response and activity in the context of a Biblical world-view, and thus convince contemporary leaders to follow after what we believe is good. It was not, after all, through the conversion of all England that Granville Sharpe, William Wilberforce and John Newton brought about the end of child labor and the slave trade. It was rather by formulating a course of action growing out of a Christian world-view, convincing themselves and some influential contemporaries of its rightness, and

then seeking legislation on the subject. Thus, I opt for a theological approach. But, which theology shall we espouse? At least three options are available and I shall discuss them in turn.

Theological Approaches

1. *Attack the Judeo-Christian tradition.* Attacks on the Judeo-Christian tradition and its view of nature are by now familiar to most of us. Wright (and others) quotes Ian McHarg's *Design with Nature*³ in which man's "bulldozer mentality" is traced to Genesis 1 and its alleged "sanction and injunction to conquer nature--the enemy, the threat to Jehovah". We shall have more to say presently about this kind of reasoning; suffice it to note for the moment that such a charge is certainly open to question, Biblically if not also historically.

2. *Modify the Judeo-Christian tradition.* Not all attacks on Biblical theology have come from outside the Christian church. It is significant that Lynn White, in some ways the father of modern discussion of the subject, recognized that the roots of the problem were religious and himself claims to be a faithful churchman.⁴ His thoughts on the subject have been reprinted in the *Journal ASA* and the questionable nature of their claim to represent Christian dogma faithfully has already been examined.⁵ However, it should be noted that many who claim to follow the Christian tradition are, in one way or another, supporting the contention made by White. A United Church minister in Vancouver recently called for a rejection of Genesis 1 as the basis of a new theology. On a more academic level, Frederick Elder, a Presbyterian minister, in his book *Crisis in Eden*⁶, has zeroed in on the so-called "J" account of creation, as contained in Genesis 2:4b ff., with its anthropocentric view of the world, as the real culprit. Elder sees some hope for redemption in the "P" document from Ch. 1 (despite its offensive vv. 26-27), an account in which

man is at least placed on some equal level with other parts of creation. Man is at least chronologically last in the "P" version, in opposition to the "J" document wherein Adam is first to appear and he then names the animals (a very significant function in light of Hebrew psychology surrounding the name.)

Elder goes on to divide mankind, and especially theological mankind, into two groups. The "exclusionists", represented by such "traditional" Christians as Harvey Cox, Herbert Richardson, and Teilhard de Chardin, advocate the kind of anthropocentrism of Genesis 2. To them man is king, his technology represents the height of redemption from the old "sacred grove" concept, wherein God and nature were never distinguished, and his dominance of the physical world is but a step in the direction of the ultimate kingdom of

God. Of course, there are major differences among such thinkers as I have mentioned, and Elder would be the first to acknowledge such, but all have in common a view that God has somehow ordained that man shall be the master of nature and, as its despot (whether benevolent or otherwise is debated) does the work of God in subduction of what is basically a godless and hostile entity.

His second group, styled the "inclusionists", represents Elder himself, along with such Christian and marginally Christian thinkers as George H. Williams, McHarg, Rachel Carson, and Loren Eiseley. Theologically he finds roots of the position in Calvin and H. R. Niebuhr, in each of whom there is present that holy regard for Mother Earth that Rudolf Otto has called a "sense of the numinous".

Elder is suggesting that Christian theology must rid itself of its anthropocentrism and begin to see the earth as a self-contained biosphere in which man is little more than a plant parasite (to use McHarg's terminology). He must see himself no longer as custodian of but rather a "part" of the environment. Along with this dethroning, or more properly abdication, of the king of the earth, will come a fresh sense of man's worth as an individual, unique in his ability to perceive eternity in various forms of natural history, and set over against a view of man as the collective, the mechanical, the technical master of the world's fate. In short, there must remain in man that mysterious sense of wonder as he stands before the burning bush, though that bush be the heart of a simple seed.⁷

A critique of such a view must consider first whether it is Biblical and second, whether it has drawn adequate and accurate conclusions from the sources it has used. Turning to the second point first, I would contend that Otto's "sense of the numinous" is by no means restricted to persons with a so-called "biocentric" world view, nor

is there any real conflict between a truly Biblical anthropocentricity and the concern for ecology Elder sets forth as a goal. Certainly Calvin, for one, quoted by Elder as having an "inclusionist's" sense of wonder at creation, was firmly in the anthropocentric camp when he wrote "as it was chiefly for the sake of mankind that the world was made, we must look to this as the end which God has in view in the government of it."⁸ Although any attempt to see in Calvin the concerns of modern ecology is doomed beforehand, there is still here a valid example of what I should like to show as a Biblical anthropocentrism combined with the necessary attitudes for dealing with today's heightened concerns.

Elder's view has many other problems, but rather than offer a critique of Elder I will suggest a Biblical alternative. Let me say at the start that I am convinced that all talk of man's abdication, of a biospheric world-view, and of a sense of mere equality with the animal and plant world is not Biblical, Christian, or practical. In the appeal to St. Francis of Assisi, in the blur created between man and nature and in the almost personalization of the natural world one senses more than a hint of a pantheistic response. I suggest that, in a Biblical view, nature has a derived dignity as the separate and subordinate creation of a transcendent God. Man has his God-given role as under-Lord, as manager and keeper, and is possessed of a cultural mandate which includes submission of any hostile forces and just as importantly, dominion over friendly forces. In this he is a partner with God who created him and, were it not for the Fall into sin (which Elder and most theological writers on the subject seem to ignore), he might have brought about the kingdom of God on earth and found out the deepest secrets of his biosphere en route.

BIBLICAL VIEW

God

Any Biblical perspective on ecology must begin with a Biblical view of God. In this sense, a Biblical world view is really theocentric rather than either anthropocentric or biocentric. Significantly, Genesis 1 begins this point and I argue that any value system or truth structure without such a starting point must quickly reduce to subjectivity. The very extent to which nature is meaningful, whether in a pantheistic, animistic, or Christian sense, is a derivative of the view of God espoused. The God of the Bible is a God who is there prior to any and all creation. Though He can stoop to converse with his creatures (witness the anthropomorphisms of Genesis 2, to say nothing of the incarnation of Jesus Christ) he is still consistently presented as above and beyond any and all of his works. In a masterful summary delivered on the Areopagus in Athens, St. Paul said of this God that He made the world and everything in it (Acts 17:24). He is the source of life, breath and everything else and He is the determining force in created history, but never can be reduced to any spatial context that man can identify and enshrine. Thus, our love of nature must be in the context of it as the handiwork of the Almighty and not as some part of God (i.e., pantheism).

Such a view is important because it has not always been universally held, and we are in position to examine the results of alternate views. It should be self-evident that such a view of a Creator-God endows nature as well as man with a real dignity, but dignity for nature, at least, can also be derived from pantheism. But what are the implications if we lower God to the level of nature or raise nature to the level of God?

We have a model for this in the Babylonian view of the universe. "Enuma Elish", representing Babylonian cosmology in the 3rd and 2nd millenium before Christ,

has the usual pagan pantheon, but the notable fact is that the world was created out of certain gods and each element in the universe furthermore represented the personality and will of a particular deity. Thus, deriving from its view of god, the society came to view nature not as an "it" but a "Thou".⁹ Such language, reproduced on a more sophisticated plane, and overlaid with a residual Judeo-Christian world-view, is seen again in many of Elder's favorite "inclusionists", and even Lynn White himself seems to long for the good old days when the groves were sacred.

For the Christian, however, God must be the God of creation. The grove may be perceived as a wonder of order and beauty, but it must never be given the robe of divine dignity. Its meaning to man must be derived from the fact of its createdness rather than its essence. Its mystery must be that God has created it and given it properties for man to study and marvel at,

but never worship or fear. For the Babylonians no such confidence in the grove existed. It was feared, not appreciated. It was irregular and capricious in its personality, not in any sense the ordered subject of scientific investigation we know today. It possessed a sense of authority, but even that authority was no guarantee against the sudden return of chaos. All of this, which we call cosmology, is clearly dependent on one's view of God, and I can hardly emphasize sufficiently the force and majesty of the Hebrew concept of a dependable and transcendent Creator as presented in Genesis chapter 1.

Nor is the transcendence of God absent in the so-called 2nd account of creation. In Genesis 2:4 we find God again completely in control of His work, creating (lit: "making"; Hebrew '*asah*') the earth and the heavens. No primitive mythology is here; rather there is a God who can be close to his creation and even direct its affairs personally, but who Himself is above it, beyond it and outside it. Again the view of the world is theocentric rather than anthropocentric or biocentric. It is this God who tells Adam to till and keep the garden.

Nature

The inclusionists" tell us we must rid ourselves of Biblical views of nature and return to a kind of neo-panteism, a resurrection of the sacred grove, which has to mean some kind of independent element of deity within the natural order. But what is the Biblical view? Is nature a worthless mass of material to be exploited and left to rot as man sates himself in luxury, while trampling underfoot his environment? Some would have us believe that this is the implication in Genesis 1:26-28. Elder attempts to convince us that the Biblical picture degrades nature at the expense of exalting man, but does the Genesis account actually reflect such a state of affairs?

We have already seen in both Genesis accounts that the created order is radically separate from God. Up to the sixth day, with its creation of man, each natural element brought into being finds its meaning in fulfilling a role cast for it in the benevolent order of things. Light dispels darkness and we have day. The firmament keeps the waters separated. The dry land provides a platform for vegetation which in turn feeds all the living creatures. The seas become in their turn an environment for the fish and swarming creatures. The two great lights rule (or give order to) the principle parts of the cycle: day and night. And finally man, as the highest of the created order, serves to keep all of the rest in order, functioning smoothly. In fact, it is in Genesis 1 with its penchant for order and its transcendent and over-arching concept of a purposeful universe, that a truly balanced cosmological system can be found--and this in the very document that is supposed to downgrade nature by its command for man to subdue and have dominion. In this document creation is seen as orderly (note the structure in the chapter), it is repeatedly stated to be good, and it is throughout seen to be serving a great and noble purpose.

Genesis 2 has relatively little to add, as it is, fundamentally, a treatise on the nature of man and his meaning in the structure. However, contrary again to what we might expect in an "anthropocentric" account¹⁰ Genesis 2 also argues for a healthy respect for environment. Indeed for most ecologists who concern themselves with the Bible at all, Genesis 2 is more palatable than Gen. 1. Here the garden is full of "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food" (v. 9). Here man's mandate is even expressed in more ecologically desirable terms. No longer is he to conquer and subdue, but rather to "till (lit: work) and guard (Hebr: *shamar*, keep)" the treasure entrusted to him. True, its value is cast in terms of its usefulness for man, but at least

one tree had a value totally separate from any use man was to make of it. Note however, that Harvey Cox and Herbert Richardson, with their anthropocentric universe, are really closer to the mark here than is Elder and his so-called "biocentrists", though neither has grasped the full fact that theocentrism must precede either second option. Cox and Richardson sometimes lose sight of the fact that it is the garden of God, not Adam, no matter how central Adam may appear in the story.

Further testimony to the value and wonder of nature is not wanting in other parts of scripture. There is the familiar and majestic Psalm 19, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork. . ." Add to this the prologue of Psalm 8--"When I consider Thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained--What is man. . ." Or Psalm 104, a marvelous Creation hymn in which nature's beauties are celebrated so graphically, but the whole is carefully set in a context pointing to man's utilization of nature as the real purpose of all its beauty and productivity. The springs in the valleys give drink to the beasts of the field and the earth is satisfied with the fruit of God's creative works. But all is ultimately for the service of man (v. 14) whether directly (as when man drinks water) or eventually (as in the wine and bread made from the plants which drink from the springs). Any suggestion that the relationship is exploitive or that nature is degraded by relegation to a utilitarian function is, of course, nonsensical. It is only when man's greed and lack of appreciation of his own proper role becomes a factor that nature is trampled underfoot. In fact, again nature's real meaning comes from her role in the sphere of created orders, and in her proper role she shines. One final word should be said on the destiny of the natural world. Biblical theology is well aware that we

live in no pristine Garden of Eden and that we are not likely to restore such a paradise, as things now stand. The reasons for this I discuss in more detail presently. But the Biblical writers never lost sight of the fact that God's original purpose for nature was that it should freely reflect His glory in a state of untrammelled beauty. Man was, from the beginning, to be the center of this paradise, and all things were to function in a harmonious relationship to man. Thus, when the prophet Isaiah speaks of the new heavens and new earth, (ch. 65:17) his covenant includes terms for harmony within both plant and animal kingdom: vineyards bear fruit, wolf and lamb feed together and none hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain. This ideal of a cosmic element in redemption, combining the theme of creation from

Genesis and that of redemption from Exodus, is nowhere more pronounced than in the later chapters of Isaiah and is taken up in Paul's letter to the Romans, Ch. 8 vv. 19-25. There the whole creation is seen with an earnest or eager longing (lit: an uplifted head in expectation) for the day when she shall be freed from bondage and obtain liberty to function without her present decay. Just when this shall become a reality, and particularly the relation it has to our own environmental efforts, is not clear. What it does say is that God's purpose for the natural world is not abandoned, and the very "hope" which is here expressed for the natural order should lend continuing dignity to our efforts in the field of ecology. When we work to free nature from some of the effects of man's sin we are upholding that which is "good" in God's sight, and expressing a commitment to a program which will find its consummation in some form of eschatological kingdom of God. That we can never hope to complete the process no more renders the charge futile than does our inability to finally eliminate poverty, racism, broken homes, or disease. In fact, by the demonstration of a Christian concern we are witnesses to the continued expression of God's ultimate purposes in the world.

Man

The key to the discussion lies in a theology of man. We have already sensed that the fly in the ecological ointment is man himself--his greed, his self-centered economic motivation, his desire for the kind of "freedom" which regards any restraints as odious.

For the inclusionists the answer seems to be found in reducing man to the level of nature, in ridding him of this Biblical anthropocentrism where he sees himself as something inherently of more value than "many sparrows". My own, and I think the Bible's, answer lies in quite the opposite direction. Both creation accounts place man at the pinnacle of creation, whether in terms

of its climactic event (as in Ch. 1) or its primary intermediary (Ch. 2, in which man is first formed and then completes creation through his naming of the animals). In the former account he is given dominion which separates him from the animals and is thus a primary element in working out the *imago dei* within him. Thus, by his creation, he already represents the highest potential for biological development and we may not, with Loren Eiseley, expect that something greater may yet come along.

As the highest form of the created order, he is to be lord of nature, not part of it. Herein lies the origin of science and technology, and the inclusionists seem at times to be calling for a return to the state existing prior to the neolithic revolution, where man would again take his place as a gatherer and predator, but would abandon his role as organizer, producer, and planner. Such an option is, of course, a practical impossibility, as I'm sure most inclusionists would admit. We simply know too much science and technology, and furthermore we have the brainpower to duplicate the process again, even if rolled back to square zero by some catastrophic event.

But what are the Biblical restraints on man in his lordly role? I think herein lies the key. Herein is the forgotten element in most of human development, herein is the weakness in any truly anthropocentric world-view. For, as C. F. D. Moule has so cogently pointed out in his small but weighty book, *Man and Nature in the NT*,¹¹ man is never seen just as lord, but as lord under God. Moule uses the term *vice-regent* or sub-manager. Man derives his meaning from God whose program, though it from the beginning offered man the kingdom, included a recognition of God's ultimate lordship over all creation and saw man as a responsible steward, not an independent tyrant. Every tree of the garden was given to man, but there were rules. Dominion was given (never, by the way, as a license to exploit

but it was dominion within (as Elder himself points out) a created order, the violation of which would naturally lead to imbalance and disaster. There is no such thing for Biblical man as unlimited freedom unlimited rights. His freedom is that of the operator of a beautifully functioning machine. As long as he treats the machine with respect and uses it in a way consistent with the functions and properties of the machine, he may continue to exercise his managerial function with no problems. But when he ignores the rules and decides he can ignore the complexities of his machine and the instructions left by its maker, his freedom is lost and he becomes the destroyer both of the machine and his own function as its lord.

Now man, through his overthrow of the rules (Biblically summarized in Genesis 3) has brought slavery both to himself and his universe. Of course, enough of God's image remains within him so that he can still exercise a powerful technical control and he can for a while appear to be creating a kingdom of his own quite independently of that kingdom promised "where dwelleth righteousness". But now the books on the city of man are beginning to be audited, and it appears that this city has one grave and mortal fault. It simply cannot overcome the selfish desires of its own citizens, even when those desires threaten to destroy the whole kingdom.

The options we are given are all insufficient. Ecologists (and Richard Wright) appeal to self-preservation but existence without meaning becomes a farce. Lynn White, Richard Means and others seem to be calling for man to abdicate his role as king of the world, but this would simply leave the whole process with no government.

I believe the only real solution is to restore the created order that freedom it lost, by freeing men from their bondage to sin and self and then showing how

they, in turn, may progressively set their environment free from the bondage into which it has been placed. This will demand a realistic view of man's problem and perhaps the Achilles Heel of almost all modern theological attempts at solution is that they discuss creation in terms of Gen. 1 and 2, but ignore Gen. 3.

In setting a man free Jesus Christ did not promise instant return to paradise. Though the head of the serpent has been bruised, thorns and thistles continue to come forth, I do not believe we will ever see a real ecological, or social harmony, until that day when the glorious liberty of the children of God shall become universal for all creation. But let us never forget that in Christ, we are already free, and we can, despite the weaknesses of the "flesh", begin to demonstrate our freedom by applying it to the many institutions of our

social order. Christians have often failed to live as free men (hence the continued presence of race prejudice and materialism among us) but where they have grasped the meaning of redemption (as witness the Clapham Sect in England or the Abolitionist preachers of New England), the effect on their world has been magnificent. The kingdom of God still awaits an eschatological consummation, but this has never prevented citizens of that kingdom from acting out in this kingdom the principles of that other. And the unique Biblical fact is that in some mysterious sense, that new order, the new heaven and the new earth, seem to be a re-creation or restoration of that order we now know! What exactly is the connection I cannot tell, but the very fact of the identification lends tremendous force and dignity to my weakest efforts at freeing this order from its bondage to sin.

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ATRA-HASIS: A SURVEY

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New discoveries continue to revive interest in the study of the ancient Near East. The recent collation and publication of the Atra-hasis Epic is a very significant example of the vigor of this field, especially as the ancient Near East is brought into comparison with the Old Testament. The epic is a literary form of Sumero-Babylonian traditions about the creation and early history of man, and the Flood. It is a story that not only bears upon the famous Gilgamesh Epic, but also needs to be compared to the narrative of the Genesis Flood in the Old Testament. The implications inherent in the study of such an epic as Atra-hasis must certainly impinge on scholars' understanding of earth origins and geology.

The advance in research that has been conducted relative to Atra-hasis is graphically apparent when one examines the (ca. 1955) rendering by Speiser¹ in comparison with the present volume by Lambert and Millard.²

Although Atra-hasis deals with both creation and flood, the present writer has set out to give his attention to the flood material only. Literature on mythological genres is voluminous. Therefore the present writer will limit this study to a survey of the source material which underlies Atra-hasis, a discussion of its content and its relation to the Old Testament and the Gilgamesh Epic.

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SOURCE MATERIAL

The source material behind the present edition has been a long time in coming to the fore. The great amount of energies that have been expended on this research will hardly be reflected in this brief study; however, the main lines of endeavor can be traced.

One may surmise that the Atra-hasis epic flourished in Babylonian civilization for some 1,500 years. At the time of Alexander the Great, when Hellenism figuratively and literally buried what was left of Mesopotamian cultural influence in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley, Atra-hasis was lost. For over two thousand years the only record known to man of a great Flood was the story in Genesis. Berossus, a Babylonian priest about the time of Alexander, wrote a Babylonian history which is also lost. Fragmented traditions of his history have come down to the present through such worthies as Polyhistor and Eusebius.³

The middle of the nineteenth century saw the beginning of serious exploration in Mesopotamia, particularly among British and French interests. Reliefs and monuments were unearthed and taken to Western museums. Thousands of clay tablets awaited decipherment, an interesting process in its own right.⁴ Kuyunjik, the larger mound at Nineveh,⁵ is the site where much Atra-hasis material was found, although its identification was not apparent for a long time. In 1842/3 Paul Emile Botta first dug at Kuyunjik, but he did not find any spectacular museum pieces such as were expected in those days. Austen Henry Layard⁶ secured British rights to dig in the area and this caused a conflict with French interests. By 1851 the palace of Sennacherib had been found.⁷ Hormuzd Rassam, a Christian of local extraction, who favored the British, became the leader of native digging efforts. At first he and his helpers dug secretly at night. Having come across the most magnificent reliefs found to date, Rassam continued digging by day. They had dug into the palace of Assyria's last great king, Ashurbanipal.⁸ His library is now well known as one of the great discoveries from antiquity. Practically all of Ashurbanipal's library was taken to the British Museum, thanks to Layard and Rassam.

In London a "layman" in scholarly circles was put to work sorting the fragments of Ashurbanipal's collection. This man was George Smith. At fourteen the humble lad was apprenticed to a firm of bank-note engravers. From an Old Testament background, his first love soon took over in his life as he read with diligence concerning the archaeology of Mesopotamia. He gave up engraving for archaeology before long, and soon was at work collating the thousands of fragments of Ashurbanipal's library. In his own words, Smith mentions with kindness the labors of Botta. Botta found Sargon's palace (which dated from

ca. 722-705 B. C.) at Khorsabad, after his work at Nineveh had proven a failure.⁹ He mentions Layard and Rassam as well, but does not mention Rassam's nocturnal digging.¹⁰ Smith showed that he knew as much about the tablets as anyone and in 1866, at the age of twenty-six, he was made Assistant in the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the museum.

Others knew that works of mythology were preserved, but only George Smith collected and joined enough broken pieces to reconstruct entire episodes, and only he could understand the content. His lack of philological training was made up for by hard work and sheer genius.¹¹

It was on December 3, 1872, nearly one hundred years ago, that Smith read a paper to the Society of Biblical Archaeology concerning his discovery of a Babylonian version of the Biblical Flood story. This paper rocked the world of Biblical scholarship. Four years later Smith published The Chaldean Account of Genesis, and among this selection of Babylonian literary texts was one Smith called "the story of Atarpi."¹² This is now known as the Epic of Atra-hasis.

An amazing feature of the story of the gathering of the fragments that make up Atra-hasis is the unusual length of time required to join the fragments properly. Smith had three broken pieces, enough to gain a plot and to distinguish this from other creation/flood stories. Smith mistook obverse for reverse and his mistake was not corrected properly until 1956. Even more amazing is the fact that, after Smith's untimely death in 1876, the three "Atarpi" fragments became separated and were not joined again until 1899, and the third of the pieces was not published until 1965, and not joined to the other two until 1967. This is the reason that Atra-hasis is spoken of as a "new" flood epic: it is new because its tablet sequence has only recently been finalized.

Other fragments of Atra-hasis naturally experienced independent histories from their discovery to their publication. V. Scheil, a French priest, published a fragment of a flood epic in 1898. His differed from Smith's, and he dated it to the reign of Ammi-saduqa (1646-26 B. C.) of the Old Babylonian dynasty.¹³ The same year a mythological text from the same period was copied by T. G. Pinches. This last text describes the creation of man.¹⁴ In 1899, the German scholar, Heinrich Zimmern wrote an article in which he gave the Umschrift of Smith's two then available fragments, showed Scheil's and Pinches' work was of the same epic,¹⁵ and demonstrated that the name of the hero should be not Atarpi, but Atra, or Atra-hasis. Still at this point the correct order of the fragments was undetermined, and so the matter remained for fifty years.

It remained for the Danish scholar, Jorgen Laessoe, to point out the proper sequence.¹⁶ Lambert and Millard take credit for publishing material done by the same original scribe who wrote Scheil's 1898 fragment. This material had been in the British Museum since 1889.

CONTENT OF THE EPIC

By way of definition, the Epic of Atra-hasis is more a literary tradition than a narrative with precise bounds and limits. Lambert states that plagiarism and a lack of respect for literary rights were common in the ancient world.¹⁷ The only "title" that Atra-hasis had in antiquity is seen repeated in the colophon at the end of each tablet, inuma ilu awilum, "When the gods like man."¹⁸

The principal edition used by Lambert was copied out by Ku-Aya, "the junior scribe." This fact is also discernible in the colophons. Scheil in 1898 had given the name as Ellet-Aya or Mulil-Aya; neither of these is acceptable. It is known that ku + divine name is Sumerian. At one time there was some question about ku in Old Babylonian, but this sign is found in the Code of Hammurapi²⁰ as well as in Ammisaduqa's own famous "Edict."²¹ Ku-Aya's text is not that of a schoolboy, even though he is called "junior scribe." He did his copying ca. 1630 B. C., if one holds to the "middle chronology," the majority opinion, on Babylonian chronology.²² The original must be before 1630 B. C., making Atra-hasis one of the oldest, practically complete texts now known. Ku-Aya's work is an edition in three tablets. Other collated pieces must be relegated to much later periods, to the late Assyrian (ca. 700-650 B. C.) in particular. George Smith's "story of Atarpi," now brought into comparison with the other pieces, must be of the Assyrian Recension, according to Lambert, since it shows marked Assyrian dialectal forms. The distinction between Old Babylonian and Middle Assyrian would show up in the orthography as well. The Assyrian story is essentially the same as Ku-Aya's, but substantially rewritten, Neo-Babylonian fragments differ even more. A Ras Shamra fragment, written in Akkadian, not Ugaritic, has been found, and is included in Lambert. Its first three lines read:

e-nu-ma ilanu^{mes} im-tas-ku mil-ka i-na matati^{mes.ti}
a-bu-ba is-ku-nu i-na ki-ib-ra-ti

The translation is:

"When the gods took counsel in the lands,
And brought about a flood in the regions of the world."

The sixth line reads:

^mat-ra-am-ha-si-sum-me a-na-ku-[ma], "I am Atrahasis."²⁴

As to the theme of the text, the essence of its content, one must categorize it as both a myth because gods play a dominant role, and an epic, because the leading character is a hero. Most basically Atrahasis deals with the problem of organization. A certain dialectic goes on here, viz., there is a conflict which goes through two phases. Both phases feature supernatural forces, but in the first "act" the conflict is among the gods for their own sakes and has to do with divine goals; the second phase concerns the conflict of the gods for the sake of man, i. e., human organization enters the picture.

Tablet I

The story begins with a hearkening back to an earlier time. It almost has a "once upon a time" flavor. Certainly the plot is etiological from the outset.²⁵ "How did man become as he is?" "Once it was like this," the modern storyteller might commence. Once the gods, those superhuman reflections of man's aspirations, worked and suffered as men do now. Quite understandably, since Mesopotamia has always depended upon man-made waterways to redistribute the capricious floodings, the gods are represented as digging the canals. This was at a time when only the gods inhabited the universe. The greater and lesser gods are mentioned in 11. 5-6. The seven great Anunnaki are mentioned. The term is used for all gods at times; at other periods the Anunnaki are the gods of the nether world.²⁶ Three senior gods are mentioned individually. They are Anu, Enlil and Enki. In 1:12 they evidently cast lots to determine their particular spheres of influence. Anu rules henceforth from heaven; Enlil evidently stayed on earth; Enki descended to his abode in the Apsu, a subterranean body of water. The Assyrian recension of the epic from 1:19 ff. probably indicates that Enki set the Igigi (here, junior gods) to work on the canals.²⁷ The Igigi suffered this humiliation for forty years and then rebelled, "backbiting, grumbling in the excavation" (1:39b-40). They agree to take their mutual grievance to Enlil. They want not just reduction of their workload, but complete relief from it. In typically anarchious fashion the junior gods set fire to their digging tools, and utilize them as torches to light their way to Enlil by night. They surround Enlil's temple, called Ekur, in the city of Nippur.²⁸ Enlil's servants, Kalkal and Nusku, bring word to the god²⁹ that he is surrounded. Lines 93 and 95 of this first tablet are a little unclear. Lambert believes some kind of proverbial usage of the word binu/bunu, "son" is employed. If this term were clear, it might be more readily apparent why Enlil does not hesitate to

summon Anu from heaven and Enki from the Apsu to stand with him against the rebels. It must be assumed that the gravity of the situation was reason enough for a coalition of the senior gods to deal with the matter. It is Anu in 1:111 who seems to be the supreme leader. The question is put to the rebels, "Who is the instigator of battle?" (11. 128, 140). The answer comes: "Every single one of us. . ." (1. 146). When Enlil heard that the extent of the antagonism toward him in his realm, earth, was so great, he cried (1:167).

It is curious that Enlil seems to recover his composure so quickly and begins to command³⁰ Anu to go to heaven and bring down one god and have him put to death as a solution to the problem. Perhaps more might be known about the decision to slay a god, if it were not for the fact that right at this juncture (11. 178-89), the text is unclear, and the various recensions must be used to fill the gap. At any rate, when the text resumes, Belet-ili is on hand.³¹ It is she who is summoned to to create³² the "Lullu-man."³³ Man now will bear the work burden of the gods. Belet-ili is called Mami in 1:193,³⁴ and then it would seem that she is also called Nintu.³⁵ Though she is the birth-goddess, she disavows any claim to being able to "make things."³⁶ She points to the skill of Enki in that realm. But in 1:203 it becomes apparent that Enki must give her the clay so that she can create man.

Enki will make a purifying bath. One god will be killed; this is one called We-ila (1:223). He is not mentioned but this once in the text.³⁷ His flesh and blood, combined with Enki's clay will result in man. God and clay, therefore, are mixed to make man in the Babylonian conception. Line 215 is instructive: "Let there be a spirit from the god's flesh."³⁸ The plan to make a man is agreed upon by the Anunnaki, the plan is carried out, and the Igigi spit on the clay. Mami then rehearses before the gods in typically redundant, oriental fashion what she has done. The summum bonum of her work is this: the gods are free. Yet, strangely, the work is not complete, because more birth-goddesses, fourteen, are called in on the project and the group proceeds to the bit simti, "the house of destiny"³⁹ (1:249) to get at the work in earnest. So the creation of man is not too clear. Fourteen pieces of clay designated as seven males and seven females, are "nipped off, " and separated by a "brick." (1:256, 259). Another break in the story occurs here. Then there are some rules for midwifery in the Assyrian recension that fills the gap. Ten months is the time necessary before the mortals are born. Finally they are born and the text relates some rules about obstetrics and marriage, but it is not particularly clear until 1:352.

At this point the significant statement is made. "Twelve hundred years had not yet passed."⁴⁰ This sentence begins the second part in

the plot, if one views its story content apart from the tablet divisions. This much time, twelve hundred years, is given as the span of time from man's creation to the Flood. During this period people multiplied and their noise became intolerable to Enlil, who becomes dissatisfied with the noise because he cannot sleep. ". . . Let there be plague," reads the last part of 1:360. Enlil has decided to reduce the noise by reducing the source, man. Namtara, the plague god, is summoned (1:380), but first, the reader is startled by the abrupt introduction of Atra-hasis, the king (1:364). Perhaps he has been mentioned in some lost portion earlier. He must be a king because his personal god was Enki himself. Usually a Babylonian's personal god was a very minor deity. This is seen in much of the wisdom literature and prayers.⁴¹ Enki is one of the chief gods; Atra-hasis must be a king. Atra-hasis petitions Enki to intervene and stop the plague. Enki advises the people to direct their attentions to Namtara, so that he will relax the plague. This is what then ensues as Tablet 1 closes with the statement repeated, "Twelve hundred years had not yet passed."⁴²

Tablet II

The sequence that ended Tablet I is now paralleled. Enlil lost his sleep again, and decides to use drought/famine to eradicate men. Adad the storm god⁴³ should withhold his rain (11:11); waters should not arise: from the abyss. Again Atra-hasis entreated Enki and at length Adad watered the earth, Lambert says, "discreetly. . . without attracting Enlil's attention."⁴⁴

From this point on in the epic the gaps frequently hide the story development. Evidently Enlil slept again but was roused by a third visitation of noise. By now Enlil must realize that some god is thwarting his extermination plans. Enlil resumes the drought. In column 3, 4 Atra-hasis is praying to Enki. By column 4 the famine is still in progress. Enki acts in the behalf of Atra-hasis in column 5. A late Babylonian piece inserted here tells of a cosmic sea that existed in the bottom of the universe.⁴⁶ From this area, fish were caught up in a type of whirlwind, and the second drought perpetrated by Enlil was averted by the sending of these fish among starving mankind. Enlil by now is tired of seeing his plans frustrated. Enki has been his adversary, he surmises. Since water (and fish) was used to save humanity this last time, water will be man's destruction, and Enki is sworn to an oath not to interfere in Enlil's plan. It would seem at this juncture Lullu-awilum, puny man, is doomed.

Tablet III

This last tablet contains the flood story itself. Lambert observes

that "the version known to George Smith from Tablet XI of the Gilgamesh Epic is in fact largely derived from the account in Atra-hasis."⁴⁷

Fortunately, Ku-Aya's Old Babylonian text is the main source of the third tablet. Atra-hasis is addressing Enki as it begins. It would seem that Enki, as is so typical of polytheistic morality, has already found a way to get around his oath to Enlil. 111:1:18 begins Enki's message for avoiding the flood, and it has a familiar ring: "Wall, listen, to me! Reed wall, observe my words!"⁴⁸ Atra-hasis is told to destroy his house, undoubtedly made of reeds, and build a boat.⁴⁹ Reeds grow particularly in southern Mesopotamia, near the Persian Gulf. Perhaps the story originated in such an environment. Interesting nautical terms are employed in 11. 29-37. Concerning the boat:

Roof it over like the Apsu.
 So that the sun⁵⁰ shall not see inside it
 Let it be roofed over above and below.
 The tackle should be very strong.
 Let the pitch be tough, and so give(the boat) strength.
 It will rain down upon you here
 An abundance of birds, a profusion of fishes.
 He opened the water-clock and filled it;
 He announced to him the coming of the flood⁵¹ for the
 seventh night.

Atra-hasis did as Enki commanded him. The reason for the flood is given "theologically" in the fact that the two gods of the earth and the deep are angry with one another. This sounds primitive indeed. Since Atra-hasis is a devotee of Enki, he must side with him and no longer live in Enlil's earth.

Column 2 of the third tablet is badly broken. It would seem the boat is being built by such as a "carpenter" and a "reed worker."⁵² By line 32 of this column, clean and fat animals are mentioned as being put on the boat. And, then, in the lines remaining of the column, the most personal touch in the poem is given. Atra-hasis must go to live with his own god. He calls for a banquet for his people and his family. Yet he cannot enjoy or even participate in this festivity because he is overcome with grief in contemplating the impending horror. At the banquet he was "in and out: he could not sit, could not crouch" (1.45). His heart was broken instead and he was vomiting.

By now the weather worsened. Adad's thunders being heard in the clouds overhead. Pitch was brought to enable Atra-hasis to close his door. The winds and the waves rose. He cut his restraining hawser and set his reed-boat adrift.

Lines are missing at the beginning of column 3 of tablet III. Restored by conjecture is the mention of the Zu bird in line 7. Zu is mentioned again in one of the recensions.⁵³ and is also found elsewhere in ancient Near Eastern mythology.⁵⁴ The strength of the flood came upon the peoples; its destruction was a nightmare. Enki took it badly from the outset. The birth-goddess Nintu⁵⁵ and the Anunnaki regret the disaster. Nintu bewails the loss of her children, who have become "like" flies.⁵⁶ She seems to have lost her purpose for existence. She rightly blames Enlil for such a lamentable act. Her crying is enunciated in 111:4:5-11. The gods thirsted during the flood, as if they could no more subsist on salt water from the Apsu than could humans. Nintu wanted beer in fact in 111:4:16. The gods stood like sheep standing together in a dry trough waiting for a drink.⁵⁷

Seven days and seven nights the deluge continued. As column 5 is missing its first 29 lines, the flood itself is over at III:5:30. Atra-hasis is "providing food" (line 32), and as the gods smell the food. "they gathered like flies over the offering." This last statement is hardly very flattering to the gods, and most typical of the skepticism of the wisdom genre in Babylonian literature. After the god's repast. Nintu arises and complains concerning the unknown whereabouts of both Anu and Enlil. Since they are the instigators of this terrible calamity. where are they? The question is not immediately answered. Instead an etiological explanation is given on flies, telling of the manufactured flies in the jewelry of lapis worn around the necks of Mesopotamian deities. The reason for this episode is given by Lambert:

Thus the flies in the story are a memorial of the drowned offspring of Belet-ili, and the idea may have been suggested to its originator by a proverb or cliché about dragon-flies drifting down the river.⁵⁹

Enlil, who now has appeared, sees the reed boat and becomes angry at the Igigi. After all, the gods had decided to exterminate man; all the gods were under oath. How did man survive? Enlil wants to know. Anu points out that only Enki, whose realm is the sea, could save man. Enki steps forward and freely admits his deeds and evidently seeks to be exonerated (in a badly damaged passage). Volume 7 is of no help in the flood story; its chief concern is proverbial sayings on childbearing. Column 8 begins at the ninth line: this is the epilogue. The text is so problematic that it is not certain who is speaking in III:8:9-18. Lambert thinks the mother goddess is a leading candidate. In line 15 the whole epic is perhaps called anniam zamara, "this song."⁶⁰ Perhaps the song was recited in some way in Babylonian religious worship.⁶¹ Thus ends the last tablet.

RELATION TO GILGAMESH XI

Still foremost in size and state of perservation among Akkadian epic selections are the twelve tablets (containing over 3,000 lines) of the Epic of Gilgamesh.⁶² The eleventh tablet here deals with the Flood.

Gilgamesh meets the figure who is synonymous with Atra-hasis of the recent epic, Utnapishtim.⁶³ The latter is called "the Faraway"⁶⁴ or "the Distant"⁶⁵ because he dwells removed from others, he is immortal. Gilgamesh had thought in Utnapishtim he would find one prepared for battle,⁶⁶ but he lies indolent upon his back (line 6). Gilgamesh has long sought immortality and he asks the serene Utnapishtim how he attained the blessed state.

Utnapishtim will tell Gilgamesh a secret which begins in Shuruppak,⁶⁷ the city where the gods lived. There the hearts of the gods led them to produce the flood.⁶⁸ The gods present are the same as those in Atra-hasis, among whom are Anu, who is called abasunu, "their father,"⁶⁹ and Enlil, who is denominated maliksunu, "their-counselor."⁷⁰ Ninigiku-Ea is present. This name is another appellative of Enki the god of wisdom who dwells in the Apsu.⁷¹ As in Atra-hasis. Enki/Ea speaks to the house of reeds, Utnapishtim's home:

Reed-hut, reed-hut! Wall, walll
 Reed-hut, hearken! Wall, reflect!
 Man of Shuruppak, son of Ubar-tutu,
 Tear down (this) house, build a ship!⁷²

Thus in both epics the command to build a boat in order to escape the flood is similar. The seed of all living creatures is called to go up into the ship. Dimensions are not given for the ship in Atra-hasis; however, Gilgamesh mentions that the ship should be accurately measured,⁷³ and that the width and length of the boat are to be equal, or square. Finally, the boat should be covered, ceiled over like the Apsu, i.e., impenetrable.

Like Atra-hasis, Utnapishtim pledges to carry out Enki's orders. He must sever his tie with Enlil's terrestrial economy and go to his own god, Enki.

There is a large break in the left margin of the tablet that extends from about line 41 to the center at about 45, and then proceeds to the center of 55 and angles back to reveal the first sign of 53.⁷⁴ A lesser break at the right side extends over lines 48-53.

Children brought pitch for Utnapishtim's boat. The "strong"⁷⁵

or the "grown ones"⁷⁶ brought all else needful. The floor space of the boat is said to be about 3,600 square meters,⁷⁷ or approximately an acre. The walls were 120 cubits high, the decks were 120 cubits on a side. The boat had six decks. Speiser conjectures that the ship took seven days to build from his restoration of line 76.⁷⁸

Utnapishtim's family, the beasts of the field, and all the craftsmen were made to go on board the ship. This is a greater number than Atra-hasis. The rain that is coming is called by Speiser "a rain of blight." It was Enki's water-clock that was set for Atra-hasis. Here it is Shamash,⁷⁹ the sun god, who sets the time of the flood. Adad's thunders signal the approaching deluge. Nergal, god of the underworld,⁸⁰ tears out the posts of the world dam, letting the waters loose. There must be a connection between Atra-hasis 111:3:9-10 and Gilgames XI:I07, where in both cases it is stated that the land was shattered like a pot.⁸¹ This must have reference to a cataclysmic force, something of diastrophism. Countless other examples could be given of this kind of parallelism between the two epics. Cataclysmic language is repeated in Speiser's rendition of line 109, "submerging the mountains."⁸²

The gods cowered during the storm in typically mortal fashion. Ishtar⁸³ seems to take the role of the Mami/Belet-ili/Nintu birth-goddess in Gilgamesh. It is she that laments the sad state of things and blames herself.

On the seventh day the flood ceased. All of mankind had returned to clay. The ship comes to rest on Mt. Nisir.⁸⁴ Utnapishtim sends forth first a dove, then a swallow and lastly a raven, which does not return to the ship. Thereupon he lets out all his "passengers" to the four winds,⁸⁵ and offers a sacrifice. The gods, smelling the aroma as in Atra-hasis, "crowded like flies about the sacrificer."⁸⁶ Ishtar and the jewels are brought into the context here too, with the idea that the jewels are a memorial remembering the flood. Enlil is excluded because he perpetrated the crime.

Utnapishtim is specifically called Atra-hasis, "the exceedingly wise," in line 187. Enlil seems to abate some of his anger and by 11. 193-4, he pronounces a blessing upon the Babylonian Noah and his wife:

"Hitherto Utnapishtim has been but a man;
But now Utnapishtim and his wife shall be like unto us
gods."⁸⁷

Thus the close similarities can be seen between Atra-hasis and Gilgamesh XI. As has been said Atra-hasis is the older of the two, its copy dating from the Old Babylonian with an archetype perhaps as early as ca. 1800 B. C. Both compositions are part myth and part epic. Both show the marks of wisdom literature in their themes of introspection. It must be remembered both heroes are "wise men." Simply because it is longer and better preserved at key points of flood-story interest, Gilgamesh remains the more detailed document on the flood.

RELATION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

In Genesis 6:5-9; 19 the author of the Book of Genesis, Moses, writes concerning God's judgment of the world by a flood. Immediately one is struck by the solemnity of the story: **וַיַּרְא יְהוָה**, "the Lord/Jehovah saw" the wickedness of man. There is no pantheon of gods conniving against one another. There is no "noise" prompting the destruction by the flood. The God of Heaven is hardly dismayed over all, the noise men may make. The problem here in Genesis is not organization or the lack of it, the problem is that "every imagination of the thoughts" of man "was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). Such a world wide problem as moral corruption is so vastly more realistic than noise.

In 6:14 God tells Noah to build a **תֵּבָה**, "an ark."⁸⁸ The ark will be of sturdier construction than mere reeds: it will be of **עֵצֵי גִפְרִית**, "gopher wood." The ark will be covered with **כִּפָּר**, "pitch."⁸⁹ The dimensions of Noah's ark are superior as well. It is not square but more boatshaped. All three accounts speak of the boat, the pitch and the door. God promises deliverance to Noah in 6:17; Enki indicates that Atra-hasis will "save life," if he escapes as planned.⁹⁰ Only in the Biblical account is the number of animals to be brought into the ark realistic. The tablet is marred in Atra-hasis 111:3:32 ff., but indiscriminate numbers of birds (?), cattle (?) and other wild creatures (?), plus Atra-basis' family, go on board.⁹¹ The "clean beast" of Genesis 7:2 may be reflected in the elluti of III:2:32.⁹²

The duration of the actual rain is more realistic also. Forty days and nights are cataclysmic duration on a world-wide scale. Six or seven days is far less believable. The flood of Genesis lasted 371 days.⁹³ With the words of Genesis 7:11, **נִבְקְעוּ כָּל־מַעְיֵנֹתַי וְאֶרֶץ הַשָּׁמַיִם נִפְתָּחוּ** the action and extent of the flood are clear. The niphal verbs here show that these natural

forces were acted upon by an outside Agent, God. One might assume that Enki's Apsu erupted adding to the waters, but the only clear statements have to do with Adad's roaring in the clouds, e. g., in III:2:49, 53 of Atra-hasis.

The closing of the boat's door is treated variously. Genesis 7:16 states simply, **וַיִּסְגֹּר יְהוָה בַּעֲזוֹ**. What obliging soul brought the kupru ("pitch") for Atra-hasis to close his door?⁹⁴ Then that one was swept away in the flood?

Very little is said about the amount and the subsequent assuaging of the waters. Even if this is the case, it is a little difficult to see how one could say of Gilgamesh XI that it portrays a local flood, since the mountains were submerged. That claim is better supported with respect to Atra-hasis, but chiefly from silence, because the latter does not give any real clue as to the extent of the flood.

The destruction of man and beast is deemed complete, however. This would imply a universal catastrophe for both Atra-hasis and Gilgamesh. All flesh died; the waters had to seek out all, in effect. Genesis 7:21-23 is most plain on this point.

Atra-hasis III:5:30 may have a reference to the sending of some kind of bird to find dry land.⁹⁵ Gilgamesh clearly indicates a dove, swallow and raven, while Genesis employs a raven and a dove. Atra-hasis does not give the place of the ark's landing. Mt. Nisir should be identified with Pir Omar Gudrun in Kurdistan, according to Speiser.⁹⁶ Ararat (**אַרְרָט**) has generally been thought to coincide with the mountain of that name in what was ancient Urartu, the region of Lake Van.⁹⁷

The altar that Noah built is "paralleled" in the Babylonian epics, as has been shown. The words **וַיִּבַּח יְהוָה אֶת־רֵיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ** "and the Lord smelled the sweet savor" (Gen. 8:21), have their grossly polytheistic analogy in both Atra-hasis and Gilgamesh. Leupold has said that God "viewed the sentiments behind the sacrifice with satisfaction."⁹⁸

If there is a blessing on Atra-hasis at the end of his epic, it is missing. III:7 is about childbirth and seems as if it has no real connection with the rest of the poem. Utnapishtim obtains immortality and goes to live somewhere in the West. Noah receives a promise from God that He will not judge the earth by water again. The Covenant is

given to Noah; there is no Babylonian counterpart to the covenant.

CONCLUSION

After languishing in museum collections for nearly a century, the Epic of Atra-hasis has at last been presented to the scholarly world in a more readable form. The process is as yet incomplete. It is hoped that more fragments may be added to the missing sections of Tablet III. Such a discovery would enhance Flood studies even more. It must be admitted at this point that Gilgamesh XI is still the chief extra-biblical document on the Flood from the standpoint of completeness and parallels. Gilgamesh is a dynamic composition; its story is quite captivating. All of its twelve tablets constitute a marvel of ancient literature, surpassed only by Scripture itself. Atra-hasis, on the other hand, is somewhat colorless by comparison. Lambert has forewarned his readers on this account: "a modern reader must not expect to find our translation immediately appealing or fully intelligible."⁹⁹ The greatest appeal in Atra-hasis must be, in the final analysis, for the philologist. The present author has only given a taste of the rich mine of comparative linguistic material in the epic. As to content, it may be reiterated with previous generations of academicians, all accounts--Atra-hasis, Gilgamesh XI (including the Sumerian flood story of Ziusudra, purposely not touched upon here) and the Genesis Flood--go back to an actual, historical occurrence of a world-wide flood catastrophe. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit has preserved the Biblical account without any mythology, polytheism or low moral concepts, and its very text has been supernaturally preserved as well.

DOCUMENTATION

1. E. A. Speiser, trans., "Atrahasis" (in Ancient Near Eastern Texts, James B. Pritchard, ed. 2nd edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 104-6.
2. W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, Atra-hasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969, pp. 42- 105). Recent periodical discussions by these co-authors include: Lambert, "New Light on the Babylonian Flood," Journal of Semitic Studies, 5/2:113-23, April, 1960; and Millard, "A New Babylonian 'Genesis' Story," Tyndale Bulletin, 18:3-18, 1967.
3. Lambert, Atra-hasis, pp. 134-7.
4. E. g., cf. Samuel Noah Kramer, The Sumerians (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 3-32.
5. Work continues on the smaller mound until very recently, cf. Geoffrey Turner, "Tell Nebi Yunus: The Ekal Masarti of Nineveh," Iraq, 32/1:68 (and especially pl. XV), Spring: 1970.

6. Layard's works are well known. Some of them include: Nineveh and its Remains (new edition; 2 vols. in 1. New York: George P. Putnam, 1852); also A Popular Account of Discoveries at Nineveh (abridged; New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1852).
7. Layard's remarks on his second expedition are interesting, cf. his Discoveries Among the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon (New York: G. P. Putnam and Company, 1853), pp. 67ff.
8. Lambert, Atra-Hasis, p. 2
9. George Smith, Assyrian Discoveries (3rd edition. New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Company, 1876), pp. 2-3.
10. Ibid., p. 4.
11. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 3.
12. Ibid.
13. "Dates are according to the "middle chronology" on Hammurapi, as presented by J. A. Brinkman in A. Leo Oppenheim, Ancient Mesopotamia (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 335-52.
14. Theophilus G. Pinches, The Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records and Legends of Assyria and Babylonia (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1902), p. 117. This fragment is from Scheil and has come to be denominated "W" in Lambert, cf. the latter's p. 129.
15. As early as 1902, i.e., at the time of Pinches' first edition of his work quoted immediately above, Pinches is willing to say, p. 117: "It is not improbable that the fragment published by the Rev. V. Scheil O. P., belongs to this legend. . . ." Pinches does not seem as convinced as Lambert implies he was.
16. Lambert, Atra-hasis, pp. 4-5.
17. Ibid., p. 5.
18. Ibid., pp. 32, 42.
19. Ibid., p. 31, n. 1; cf. also Rene Labat, Manuel d'Epigraphie Akkadienne (quatrieme edition; Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1963), pp. 210-11.
20. The sign is * in Old Babylonian, and is found in phrases such as ina kaspi (KU. BABBAR)-su, "in his silver," cf. E. Bergmann, Codex Hammurabi: Textus Primigenius (editio tertia; Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1953), p. 8 (Law 35, line 3, of the Code).
21. I.8' in the edict reads, in part, ku.babbar^{am}, "and silver," F. R. Kraus, Ein Edikt des Königs Ammi-saduqa von Babylon, Studia et Documenta ad iura Orientis Antiqui Pertinentia, Vol. V (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), p. 18. Incidentally, Clay has another version of the name of the scribe in the colophon: Azag-

- ^dAya, cf. Albert T. Clay, A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform and Other Epic Fragments in the Pierpont Morgan Library. Oriental Series, Researches, Vol. V-3. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), p.61.
22. Cf. Brinkman in Oppenheim, Ancient Mesopotamia, p. 337.
 23. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 131.
 24. Ibid., pp. 132-3.
 25. The "etiologial motif" was first popularized by Gunkel and is still a topic of current discussion, cf. F. Golka, "Zur Erforschung der Atiologien in Alten Testament," Vetus Testamentum, 20/1:90, January, 1970.
 26. Giorgio Buccellati, "Religions of the Ancient Near East" (unpublished lecture notes, University of California, Los Angeles, California), April 16, 1970.
 27. Lambert, Atra-Hasis, pp. 42-3.
 28. The word E. KUR may be subdivided: E is "temple" and KUR is "mountain," in Sumerian/Akkadian. Thus the Ekur in Nippur was the "mountain temple," Enlil's ziggurat; cf. Buccellati, "Religions." April 28, 1970.
 29. Nusku calls Enlil Beli, "my lord." This name has had a wide distribution in Semitic languages and is seen in the West Semitic לַעֲבֹד, "to marry, rule over;" לַעֲבֹד, "owner, lord," and the many compound names using this epithet, Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and C. A. Briggs, eds., A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 127-8 (Hereafter BDB).
 30. The word liqi is an imperative from lequ in 1:171.
 31. The name indicates "Mistress/Lady of the gods." By 1 247 Ma-mi has undergone what Moran terms "a change of status" to be-"Mistress of all the gods," William L. Moran, "The Creation of Man in Atra-hasis I 192-248," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 200:48-9, December 1970.
 32. The term libima is from banu, final weak, analogous to the Hebrew בָּנָה "to build."
 33. Lullu is to be taken here as lullu-awilum, "mankind," Lambert, Atra-hasis, pp. 175, 187. -
 34. The usual word for "mother" in Babylonian is ummu, R. Borger, Babylonische-assyrische Lesestücke (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1963), p. LXXXVI.
 35. Nintu is but one of the many names of the mother-goddess. The name means "queen who gives birth," according to Kramer, Sumerian Mythology: A Study of Spiritual and Literary Achievement in the Third Millennium B. C. (revised edition; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p. 41.

36. I:200, Lambert, Atra-hasis, pp. 56-7.
37. Ibid., p. 153, n. 223
38. The word for "spirit" is etemmu, "ghost," Ibid., p. 177. There is, of course, no analogy to the Holy Spirit.
39. Simtu is a word normally translated "fate" or destiny," Oppenheim, Ancient Mesopotamia, p. 201. These renderings are misleading, though, because the Akkadian word means much more than the connotation in English. "Destinies" can be conceived concretely, they can be written down, hence a "table of destinies." The power of the gods is not inherent in Babylonian thought, but is in a god's power to hold onto the destinies, cf. Buccellati, "Religions," April 21, 1970.
40. The text reads "600.600 mu.hi.a." Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 66. "To acquire a god" was to experience unexpected good fortune. Jacobsen says: "In Sumerian religion the power whose presence was felt in such experiences was given form from the situation and was envisaged as a benevolent father or mother figure concerned with the individual in question and bent on furthering his fortunes," Thorkild Jacobsen, "Formative Tendencies in Sumerian Religion" (in The Bible and the Ancient Near East, G. Ernest Wright, editor. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1961), p. 270.
42. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 71.
43. Like Baal in his actions, his name appears in many personal names, e. g., ^dSamsi-dAddu, Samsi Adad, king of Assyria, cf. Georges Dossin, Correspondance de Samsi-ddu. Archives Royales de Mari, I (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1950), p. 34 (ARM 1:7:3).
44. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 10.
45. The frequent breaks in the text have caused Lambert to number Tablet II differently.
46. The Babylonians believed everything floated (?) in a heavenly ocean, Buccellati, "Religions," April 9, 1970.
47. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 11, cf. George Smith, The Chaldean Account of Genesis (4th edition: London: Sampson Low, Marston Searle, and Rivington. 1876).
48. For the relevant lines. cf. Gilgamesh XI:21-2 in E. A. Speiser. trans. "The Epic of Gilgamesh" (in Ancient Near Eastern Texts. James B. Pritchard. ed. 2nd edition, Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1955). p. 93.
49. Again, the words "build a boat." bini eleppa show that in "to build" a boat and "to create" a man, banu/בָּנָה is used synonymously. It is interesting to note that in Genesis 2:22. יָצָא from בָּנָה, is used in the creation of Eve.

50. Actually ^dSamas, the sun god, is indicated.
51. Abubu is "flood" in Babylonian, from * 'bb, or ebebu, "to purify, clean," Borger, Lesestucke, p. LIII.
52. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 160.
53. Ibid., pp. 125, 167n.
54. Cf. Speiser, "The Myth of Zu" (in Ancient Near Eastern Texts, James B. Pritchard, editor. 2nd edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 111 ft.
55. Nintu has feverish lips, a disease, Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 161.
56. The word zubbu is "fly" in Atra-hasis. In the Ugaritic literature il.dbb is used, where it probably means "Lord of the Fly," Cyrus H. Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1965), p. 388. The z-d is phonemically assured. II Kings 1:3 and Matt. 12 :24 are later instances of this phenomenon of the king of demons.
57. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 163.
58. Ibid., Gilgamesh XI:167-9 accuses Enlil alone.
59. Ibid., p. 164.
60. BDB, p. 274. Hebrew equivalents are: זִמְרָה and זִמִּיר, "song, melody."
61. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 165.
62. Cf. Oppenheim, Ancient Mesopotamia, p. 255.
63. Cf. Speiser, "Gilgamesh," p. 88, n. 143, and also cf. Thorkild Jacobsen, The Sumerian King List. Assyriological Studies, No. 11 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 76-7, n. 34. Ubar-Thtu the father (?) of Utnapishtim is recorded in the king list, but Ziusudra, Utnapishtim's Sumerian name, is missing.
64. Speiser, "Gilgamesh," pp. 92ff.
65. Alexander Heidel, The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels (2nd edition; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 80.
66. Speiser, "Gilgamesh," p. 93.
67. Cf. Borger, Lesestucke, III, Tafel 60, line 11. It must be due to scribal error that this reading is ^{uru}Su-ri -pak when it should be ^{uru}Su-ru-pak.
68. Ibid., line 14: there is *** , a-bu-bi, "flood."
69. Ibid., II, 94.
70. Ibid., Mlk designates "king" in Hebrew, but the idea inherent is "counselor" in Akkadian. Certainly the two are closely aligned.
71. Henri Frankfort, et al., Before Philosophy (reprinted: Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 267.
72. Speiser, "Gilgamesh," p. 93.
73. Translation by Heidel, Gilgamesh, p. 81, l. 29.
74. Borger, Lesestucke, III, Tafel 61.
75. Heidel, Gilgamesh, p. 82.
76. Speiser, "Gilgamesh," p. 93.

77. Heidel, Gilgamesh, p. 82
78. Speiser, "Gilgamesh." p. 94.
79. It is an easy matter to trace, Utu of the Sumerians through Shamash of the Akkadians to שָׁמֶשׁ, the word for "sun" in the Old Testament.
80. Speiser, "Gilgamesh," p. 94, n. 205.
81. cf. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 93
82. There is a broken sign (*). This could be restored to *, KUR Sumerian; sadu, Akkadian, "mountain which is what Speiser is supposing.
83. The Sumerian Inanna.
84. Vide infra.
85. Instead of anything analogous to אַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת, "four winds," in Hebrew, the text here has the numerical *** (4.IM. MES), 4 sari, "four winds, " Borger, Lesestücke, I, LXXXI; II, 99; III, Tafel 65.
86. Speiser, "Gilgamesh," p. 95.
87. Heidel, Gilgamesh, p. 88.
88. John Skinner, A. Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis (in The International Critical Commentary, S. R. Driver, et al., eds. 2nd edition. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1930), p. 160; and G. J. Spurrell, Notes on the Text of the Book of Genesis (2nd edition, revised; Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1896), p. 76, think that this is possibly an Egyptian loanword, perhaps teb(t), "chest, sarcophagus." It is interesting that the Egyptian word for "box" is written * . The first sign, *, stands for a reed shelter in the field, the * is the sign for water, and the last is a determinative for any kind of box or coffin. The resultant word is hn^d. If, however, the word is * in Egyptian, as Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, eds., Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1951), p. 1017, say, then Gardiner lists in his grammar *, "floats," under *. the first sign of which indicates "reed floats used in fishing and hunting the hippopotamus," Alan Gardiner, Egyptian Grammar (3rd ed., revised; London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 514, cf. also A. S. Yaduda, The Language of the Pentateuch in its Relation to Egyptian (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), I, 15*.
89. BDB, p. 498. The equivalent is given in Atra-hasis, III:1:33,
90. Lambert, Atra-hasis, pp. 88-9.

91. Ibid., pp. 92-3.
92. Ibid., p. 178; the verb elelu, "be pure," has as its noun ellu, "pure."
93. John C. Whitcomb, Jr., and Henry M. Morris, The Genesis Flood (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1962), p. 3.
94. Lambert, Atra-hasis, pp. 92-3. The words are [k]u-up-ru ba-bi-il. The verb is from abalu, "to carry," The form babel does not look passive, but it is well-attested that from Old Akkadian on by-forms with an initial b are passive, Ignace J. Gelb, et al., The Assyrian Dictionary (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1964), vol. I, pt. I, pp. 10, 28-9. "Pitch was brought" is the correct translation.
95. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 98; the words ana sari, "to the winds, " are all that is left.
96. Speiser, "Gilgamesh," p. 94, n. 212.
97. Cf. the Assyrian Empire map in the unnumbered back pp. of Georges Roux, Ancient Iraq (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican Books, 1966). The present writer has long wondered what connection is possible between the biblical Mt. Ararat and the "city state of Aratta, probably situated somewhere in the region of the Caspian Sea, "Kramer, The Sumerians, p. 42. Urartu itself had a long history and appears, e. g., in Sargon's eighth campaign in the late eighth century, B. C., cf. Francois Thureau-Dangin, Une Relation de la Huitieme Campagne de Sargon. Textes cuneiformes, Musee du Louvre, III (Paris: Librairie Paul Geuthner, 1912), I. 61; p. 12, pl. III.
98. H. C. Leupold, Exposition of Genesis (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950), I, 322. The Targum is careful to avoid such anthropomorphisms. Genesis 8:22 reads there: וַיִּקְבַּל יְיָ קָרְבָּנֶיהָ, "and the Lord received/accepted with pleasure his sacrifice/gift," cf. Marcus Jastrow, comp., A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature (New York: Pardes Publishing Company, 1950), II, 1309, 1486 and 1411, for the terms. קָבַל the Pael here, is "he received"; רַעְוָא is "pleasure," and קָרְבָּן, the term referred to in Mark 7: 11, "Corban" (A. S. V.).
99. Lambert, Atra-hasis, p. 6.

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THE ROLE OF GENESIS 22:1-19 IN THE ABRAHAM CYCLE: A COMPUTER- ASSISTED TEXTUAL INTERPRETATION

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O. Introduction

The story of Abraham's attempted sacrifice of his son Isaac as recorded in Gen 22:1-19 has caught the interest of countless students and scholars in a rainbow of disciplines. Philosophers, historians, and biblical expositors have all exhibited an abiding interest in the pericope.¹ Recent advances in the areas of linguistics and technology now give occasion for a new generation of researchers to discover the passage as well. The following study is an interdisciplinary one, bringing together insights from the areas of discourse linguistics and information science in an examination of the text.

1. *The Prominence of Gen 22:1-19 in the Abraham Cycle*

Gen 22:1-19 is a crown jewel in the treasure box of OT narrative. Expositors have garnished it with accolades, calling it "one of the most beautiful narratives in the Old Testament,"² "the most perfectly

¹ One can find such comments in the writings of such diverse personalities as I. Kant (*Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* [New York: Harper & Row, 1960] 175), and A. Toynbee (*An Historian's Approach to Religion* [Oxford: University Press, 1979] 26, 39), not to mention all the individuals more directly connected with OT and NT studies.

² C. Westermann, *Genesis 12-36: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985) 355.

formed and polished of the patriarchal stories,"³ "consummate storytelling,"⁴ and "the literary masterpiece of the Elohist collection."⁵

But what is it, the reader may ask, that sets this episode in Abraham's story apart from all the others? What grammatical, lexical, literary, structural, and sociolinguistic devices (if any) has the author employed so artfully to gain this acclaim? The answers to these questions are explored in the present section.

1.1 *Conclusions from a Computer-Assisted Study*

Help is first sought from a piece of artificial intelligence software entitled DC,⁶ developed over the past four years by the present writer. This program is designed to read and evaluate sizeable blocks of linguistic data. It produces summary reports of relevant text-based statistics and attempts to identify thematic centers present within the data.

1.1.1 *Background of the Computer-Assisted Study*

Studies coming out of the recently developed discipline of discourse linguistics have demonstrated that communicators constantly manipulate three variables in the language code so as to express their intentions. These variables are unit size, arrangement of information within a given communication unit, and type of information within a unit. An author may designate a certain section of a text as thematic in at least three ways: 1) through the placement of language-specific "marked" features within that portion, 2) through the employment of statistically infrequent features within that portion, and 3) through increasing the structural and semantic complexity of a given portion. Based on the premise that authors drop objective, recoverable hints regarding their communicative intentions within a text, DC was developed in an effort to assist text analysts in the process of identifying and interpreting those hints. In its present form, DC is designed to

³ G. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972) 238.

⁴ D. Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* (London: Tyndale, 1967) 144.

⁵ J. Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1917) 329. The praise is justified, even if the authorial assignment is not

⁶ An abbreviated acronym for the Discourse Critical Text Analysis Program. The program is currently being "beta tested," and should be ready for interested individuals within the next year. Individuals interested in obtaining the latest version of this and related programs may contact the author at the address listed at the front of the article.

perform high-speed analysis of Hebrew narrative framework materials. By monitoring changes in the language code of the nonquotational aspects of Hebrew narrative text and then comparing the data with normal Hebrew narrative patterns, the program is able to make intelligent judgments about a variety of textual features. Factors that are considered in making decisions include clause length, information order, subject type, subject frequency, verb type, verb frequency, length of quotation associated with a given clause, as well as relative location within the text.

In performing the present study, DC analyzed a prepared data file based on the BHS Hebrew text extending from Gen 11:27 to 25:11. The program was instructed to divide the Abraham cycle into twenty-one subsections, and then to analyze and compare each of the divisions among themselves. The divisions, along with an indication of their essential content, are listed in table 1.

1.1.2 *Results of the Computer-Assisted Study*

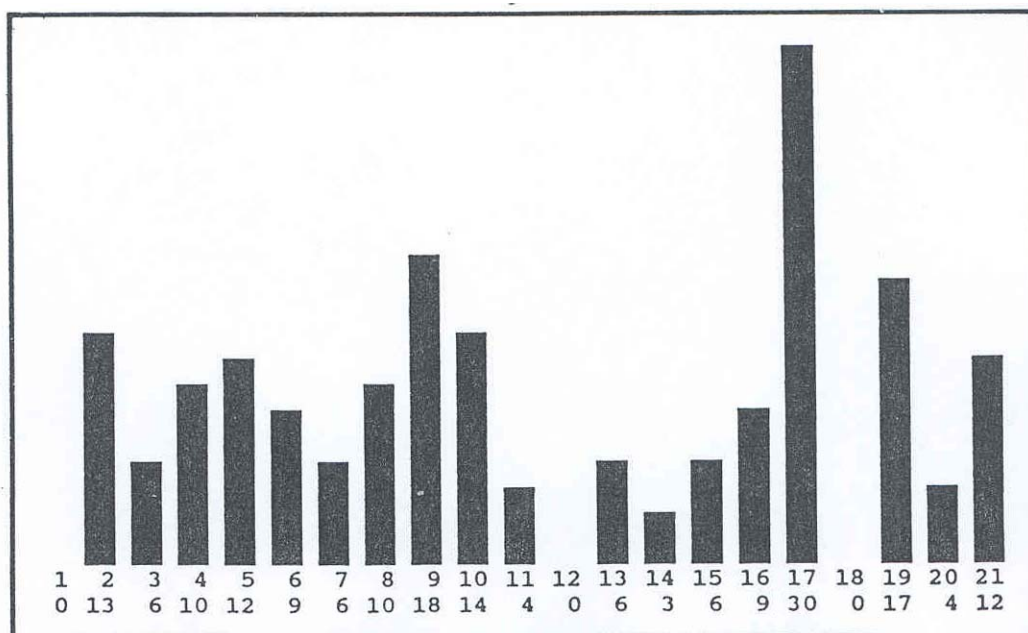
After the data had been read and evaluated by DC (a process taking about three minutes), the results were displayed. The conclusion of DC's analysis was that division 17, Gen 22:1-19, was the portion of the Abraham cycle encoded by the author as the thematic peak. Abraham was, incidentally, identified as the thematically central character. DC rated its degree of confidence associated with these decisions as high.

Three primary evidences pointing to Gen 22:1-19 as peak were identified by the program. First and most significant, in this section of the cycle, the thematically central character occurred as the subject of a narrative framework verb more times than any other. Thirty times throughout these 19 verses Abraham functioned in this manner, twelve more than in any other section. The assumption behind this test is that the author of a text will normally employ the key character most significantly at the most crucial portion of the story.

Furthermore, the combined number of occasions in which either Abraham or God served as narrative framework verb subjects (40) also exceeded that of any other portion of the text. The closest competitor was division 10 (Gen 18:16-33), which had a total of 25 such occurrences. The operative assumption behind this criterion is that the author of OT narrative will normally have God, the divine protagonist, on stage during the portion of the story reckoned by the author as most important. God's ten employments in the subject role (in some instances identified as the theophanic **יְהוָה מְלָאךְ**) mark him as particularly significant in the section, especially when it is noted that

Table 1: Divisions in the Abraham Cycle

Division No.	Location	Essential Content
1	11:27-32	Introduction
2	12: 1-9	Call & Move to Canaan
3	12:10-20	Abram in Egypt
4	13:1-8	Abram & Lot Separate
5	14:1-24	Abram Rescues Lot
6	15:1-21	God's Covenant with Abram
7	16:1-16	Hagar & Ishmael
8	17:1-27	Circumcision
9	18:1-15	Three Visitors
10	18:16-33	Abram Pleads for Sodom
11	19:1-30	Sodom & Gomorah Destroyed
12	19:31-38	Lot & His Daughters
13	20:1-18	Abraham & Abimelech
14	21:1-7	Isaac's Birth
15	21:8-21	Hagar & Ishmael Sent Away
16	21:22-34	Treaty at Beersheba
17	22:1-19	Abraham Tested
18	22:20-24	Nahor's Sons
19	23:1-20	Abraham Buries Sarah
20	24:1-66	Isaac Gets a Wife
21	25:1-11	Abraham Dies

Table 2: Narrative Framework Subject Occurrences of Abraham
(Listed by Division)

in six of the 21 divisions he never has a subject role, and in four others he is so used no more than two times.⁷

A final reason germane to DC's decision to select Gen 22:1-19 as the thematic center was the location of this pericope within the overall expanse of text. A tendency of narrators in all cultures is to place the section of story being encoded as most significant in the latter 50 percent of the overall text. Clearly division 17 fits this criterion. Incidentally, it should be pointed out that DC identified Gen 22:1-19 as possessing the highest connectivity among the sections of text occurring in the final half of the Abraham cycle. The high connectivity value is significant because it indicates that this pericope repeats verbs and subjects used elsewhere in the text to a higher degree than any other episodes in the likely peak region. The reuse here of verbs and subjects used elsewhere in the Abraham cycle suggests that division 17 contains a number of motifs used elsewhere in the Abraham cycle.

1.2 Observations from Discourse Linguistics

Beyond the observations that can presently be made on the basis of the computer program, numerous other features within the grammatical and semantic code of the text suggest that the author intended the story of Abraham's divine test to be the centerpiece of his story.

1.2.1 Semantic Prominence Markers

Employment of a Prominent Geographical Setting--a Mountain

One of the more subtle means by which an author sets apart an episode intended to be taken as central is through the staging of the event. Quite often the event will occur in marked settings. The setting may be highlighted through unusual weather conditions (e.g., storms--Noah [Genesis 7-8], Ezra [Ezra 10], Job [Job 38], Jonah [Jonah 1]) or through usage of unusual places, especially mountains (e.g., Moses at Sinai; Elijah at Carmel; Jesus at the Mount of Transfiguration, and Calvary).

According to the story, God directed Abraham to go to a mountain. The key events in Abraham's test actually occurred on that mountain. The fact that this is the only story in the Abraham cycle with such a "marked" setting possessing a positive connotation increases the conviction that Gen 22:1-19 is literally to be understood as

⁷ The six divisions in which God is not employed as subject of a narrative framework verb are: 1, 5, 12, 16, 18, and 19. The four divisions in which God is employed only one to two times are: 3, 4, 20, and 21.

the high point of the overall series. The fact that the mountain chosen for this event later became Jerusalem's temple mount (cf. 2 Chron 3:1) would have given added religious prominence, and therefore significance, to the site for later Israelite audiences.⁸

Employment of a Sociolinguistically Significant Temporal Setting—the Third Day

Not only may an author manipulate the geographical and meteorological setting, he/she may also bring prominence to an episode by its temporal setting. This may involve placing it at an unusual time of day (e.g., night [Ruth 3]) or on a sociologically significant day (e.g., Jesus' Last Supper and crucifixion during the feast of Passover festivities).

As noted by numerous commentators, “three days is the period of preparation for more important events in the Old Testament.”⁹ Its presence, used elsewhere throughout the Book of Genesis in connection with significant events,¹⁰ is found in the Abraham cycle only here. Though this feature is a subtle one and would have probably communicated only on the subliminal level to the original audience, its presence in Gen 22:1-19 is telltale.

⁸ The identification of Mount Moriah with the site of the Solomonic temple invites extended speculation concerning the date of composition and historical precision of the Pentateuch. A common technique in narrative composition is to use a location considered especially important by the intended audience as the setting of the most important event in a story. With the temple mount in Jerusalem surely being the most important site in monarchic and Judahistic Yahwism, a writer creating the composition from the general time period of 950-450 B.C. could conceivably have borrowed the prestige of the Jerusalem temple complex and retrojected it back into the Abraham narrative. If this were so, the narrator could then have either modified a tale originally associated with another site in Palestine, or simply created a new one. Though I have never read this line of reasoning in Genesis commentaries, I suspect it would find favor from many. Consistent with this suspicion is the fact that the majority of 20th-century commentators understand the story of Abraham's attempted sacrifice of his son to be primarily the product of the “Elohists,” with minor additions (vv 15-18) coming from a “Jehovistic Redactor” (cf., e.g., Skinner, 327, 331, and Westermann, 363).

My personal opinion in this matter differs from the preceding line of reasoning. I believe that the events of Gen 22:1-19 happened exactly as stated and were written down prior to the period of Israelite monarchy. The fact that Moriah was later identified with the site of the Solomonic temple and, at a still later time, with the general area of Calvary is a testimony to God's oversight of history, not the creative genius of an OT narrator.

⁹ Westermann, 358. Cf. also G. M. Landes, “The ‘Three Days and Three Nights’ Motif in Jonah 2:1,” *JBL* 86 (1967) 446-50.

¹⁰ E.g., Gen 31:22; 34:25; 40:20; 42:18.

Heightened Vividness through Extended Repartee

When a narrator wishes to bring additional prominence to a particular episode, he or she will often do so by increasing the amount of dialogue at that point in the story. Quotations, the content of which was too trivial to include elsewhere in the narrative, may be present in force in the highlighted section, achieving at times the effect of drama rather than simple narrative.

Lively, if brief, dialogic exchanges are in evidence in three sections of the Abraham test: 22:1-2 (three quotations: two by God; one by Abraham), 22:7-8 (four quotations: two by Isaac; two by Abraham), and 22:11-12 (three quotations: two by יהוה *YHWH*; one by Abraham). These three occurrences of the phenomenon suggest that the author intended the audience to participate in this episode more intimately than in any of the others in Abraham's life.

Employment of a Sociologically Significant Speech Act—an Oath

From a sociolinguistic standpoint, perhaps the most solemn and significant genre of speech in Israelite communication was the oath. The taking of an oath was always serious business, but never more serious than when God himself was the one doing so. The usage of this ultimately significant speech act within Gen 22:1-19 serves as one additional indication that the author was intending this section to be taken as the climax of the Abraham cycle. Confirmation of this opinion—should any be necessary is found in the fact that reference is evidently made to Yahweh's oath of 22:15-18 five times in later Scriptures; three times in the Pentateuch (Exod 13:11; 32:13; 33:1); and twice in the NT (Luke 1:73; Heb 6:13). Throughout the entirety of the Pentateuch, God never again swears by himself that he will do something.¹¹

Employment of Dilemma and Paradox

A common manner of focusing the audience's attention on a given section of text is through presenting confrontations between contradictory values, ideals, or concepts. The delicious tensions created by such conflicts heighten interest levels and thus aid an author in controlling audience focus. Abraham finds himself in dilemmas more than once within the Genesis stories—e.g., when he is forced to choose between preservation of his life and loss of his wife, and when

¹¹ Outside of the Pentateuch he is recorded as having done so in the following locations: Isa 45:23; 62:8 (swearing by his right hand and mighty arm); Jer 22:5; 44:26 (swearing by his name); 49:13; 51:14.

he is promised a land for his descendants though he has fathered nary a son. However, no conflict is more dynamic, no dilemma more wrenching than that experienced in 22:1-19. The choices were simple for Abraham, yet excruciating. He could refuse God and preserve his son's life, thereby jeopardizing the divine legacy. Or he could obey God and preserve his right to a divine inheritance, yet lose his beloved heir. This superlative example of dilemma indicates that the author intended the story of Abraham's testing to be the climax of the Abraham cycle.

Paradox is evident in the fact that the very God who promised that Isaac would be the heir of promise (Gen 17:16, 19, 21) was now the one who required the death of childless Isaac at the hands of Abraham (22:2). The curve of human logic trails off into an asymptote as the gracious giver of the promise becomes the supreme threat to the promise.

Employment of Paronomasia

Memorable-and thus highlighted-sections of text are also created through the utilization of paronomasia. The artful employment here of the verb **פָּרַח** in both the Qal (vv 4, 8, 13, 14) and Niphal stems (v 14) serves as one of the most significant examples of this in all of OT literature. The pun is sharpened especially because of the semantic ambivalence of the final employment of the word translated "appear provide." Translators and exegetes alike have found grist for footnote mills here.

Inclusion of God's Final Activities Relative to the Abraham Cycle

God or the Angel of Yahweh occurs as the subject of a narrative framework construction ten times during the "testing of Abraham" pericope. However, in the remainder of the Abraham cycle, he never again functions as the subject of an event-line verb. This relatively dense concentration followed by a dearth of appearances suggests that this episode contains God's final and, predictably, most memorable actions.

The final event-line verb of which a divine being is the subject is the theophanic utterance of 22:15-18. A tendency in narrative is to make a major character's final sizeable speech his or her most important one. The quotation in vv 15-18 stands as the last in a series of 35 speeches delivered by God or the Angel of Yahweh throughout the Abraham cycle and ranks sixth in length. As last in the series, it possesses a natural prominence that tends to make it particularly memorable. The fact that it is contained in the 22:1-19 pericope serves additionally to confirm the intended centrality of this section.

1.2.2 Lexical Prominence Markers

Employment of a Hapax Legomenon

A favored means by which communicators draw attention to particular language units is through the employment of unusual vocabulary. The narrator's usage of a *hapax legomenon* in v 9, עֵקֶד, has certainly accomplished that. In fact, the common Jewish name for the entire temptation pericope is 'aqedah.

Employment of a Unique Narrative Clause Structure

Information may also be made to stand out by expressing it in a clause whose structure differs significantly from the norm. Gen 22:13 contains a construction that contains no parallels anywhere in the narrative framework of the Pentateuch. A woodenly literal gloss of the clause reads "And-behold ram behind being-caught in-the-bush by-his-horns." Though exclamatory clauses are relatively rare in their own right, no other וְהִנֵּה clause in the corpus of Pentateuchal data contains an adverb in the preverb field. This information order was apparently problematic enough to translators to warrant a textual emendation, replacing אַחֲרָי with אֶחָד; the LXX, Samaritan Pentateuch, and Aramaic targums all accept this modification. The majority of popular modern English versions follow this emendation as well.¹²

Yet on the basis of modern linguistics and textual criticism's principle of *lectio difficilior*, the awkward reading of the MT seems preferable. Discourse linguists recognize that natural human language patterns predictably contain grammatical abnormalities in zones of high thematic interest. In 22:13 it can be argued that the conveyance of a once-in-a-universe event, i.e., a ram being caught in a thicket behind a man who is just about to sacrifice his favorite son, required a once-in-a-grammatical-universe kind of clause.

Employment of Lexical Variety in Divine References

Within Hebrew narrative, characters are made more prominent through increasing the number of means used in referring to them. Within this section of the Abraham cycle, three different words or phrases are used to refer to God: אֱלֹהִים, מֶלֶךְ, and יְהוָה. The

¹² Included among the popular versions which base their translation on an emended Hebrew text are the New English Bible, the New American Bible, the Jerusalem Bible, the Good News Bible, the Living Bible, and the New International Version. Popular English versions accepting the MT's reading include the King James Version, the Revised Standard Version, the New American Standard Version, and the New King James Version.

diverse referencing of God in 22:1-19 suggests that the author was deliberately increasing the thematic centrality of God, the ultimately significant divine character, at this point in the story.

2. The Role of Gen 22:1-19 in the Abraham Cycle

In spite of the generous praises accorded Gen 22:1-19, no consensus exists as to its function within the Abraham cycle. The majority of 19th and 20th century scholars have preferred instead to interpret the story as though its essential message was derivable apart from any consideration of its immediate literary context.¹³ Thus it has been variously perceived as an explanation for the absence of human sacrifice in Israelite religion, an etiological legend, and an edificatory tale depicting model obedience.¹⁴ By most accounts, its "true" purpose cannot be known anyway, since the story was supposedly repeatedly transformed by the OT community of faith to meet her changing spiritual needs.

The recent expansion of the biblical scholar's role to include that of literary critic promises to bring with it a reevaluation of prevailing conclusions, or at least a redirecting of efforts. With the advent of canonical criticism, reader-response criticism, and the like, the biblical scholar is free to examine a text as it now stands. The following conclusions are based on an evaluation of the story as it is found in the MT.

The thesis of this paper is that Gen 22:1-19 functions as the thematic crux of the Abraham story, bringing together in climactic fashion seven different motifs developed throughout the whole. Each of these motifs is discussed below.

2.1 The Climax of the "Abraham Tested" Motif

The unambiguous intention of the biblical narrator is that the 19 verse pericope of Genesis 22 be understood as a divine testing of Abraham. If it is valid to say that the events of this chapter are the only ones in Abraham's life explicitly called a "test" (Heb. **נִסָּה**), it is equally valid to note that this is not the only test within Abraham's life. In fact, at several points in his life Abraham faces significant tests. The testing motif begins with God's call for Abraham to leave country, nation, and family (12:1). It continues with the test of famine in

¹³ Impetus and justification for this surgical removal of text from context comes, arguably, from biblical scholarship's preoccupation with source identification.

¹⁴ Cf. Westermann, 354; Skinner, 3.32.

the promised land (12:10). His years in Palestine are dogged by the continuing test of faith in God's promise of an heir (15:4-6). But the concluding and obviously climactic test of Abraham's life was God's call to take a final journey, one parallel in some ways to his journey of chap. 12. As in his first expedition, Abraham did not know his destination when he set out; as in the original journey so many years before, Abraham was called to separate himself from his people in this case his only son. As the last test in the series, the journey of 22:1-19 holds the position of natural prominence.

2.2 The Climax of the Abrahamic "Heir Denied" Motif

That concern for a proper heir for Abraham would be a central issue in the story of Abraham is implied in the genealogical note of 11:30. Even before the readers learn of Abraham's promises they are informed of his problem: Sarai is barren. The thread of Abraham's concern for a proper heir is woven more consistently into the fabric of his story than is any other. Would nephew Lot substitute in some way for his own lack of offspring (cf. 13:14-16)? What about Eliezer of Damascus (15:2-5, 13, 16, 18)? If not him, then perhaps Ishmael (16:2-10; 17:8, 18). Do not make me laugh, God! You mean Sarah is going to bear the child that will be Abraham's proper heir (17:15-21; 18:10-14)?

One questions whether Abraham himself believed God's promise. No sooner had the Lord given the astounding assurance of effete Sarah's impending motherhood than Abraham imperiled it all by giving Sarah in marriage to another man (20:2-13). Nevertheless, God rescued Sarah and delivered on his promise (21:1-7). Now in chap. 22 the child whose birth was hinted at twelve chapters previously (11:30), the one for whom Abraham had waited a lifetime and whom he loved above all others, was to be given up to God as a childless burnt offering (22:2). This most prominent theme--that of Abraham's search for a proper heir--ties the diverse stories of the Abraham cycle together more securely than any other.

2.3 The Climax of the "Abraham the Altar Builder" Motif

Abraham's pious devotion to the Lord is evidenced by the altars he built and the sacrifices he offered. On three occasions throughout his story the narrator depicts Abraham as constructing an altar dedicated to Yahweh (12:8; 13:18; 22:9). Only in the third instance does the narrator note the actual offering of a sacrifice. In the previous instances Abraham merely "called on the name of the Lord" (12:8; 13:4, 18).

The extra detail provided in the altar sequence of 22:1-19 clearly sets this event above the others.

2.4 The Climax of the Abrahamic "Separation from Family" Motif¹⁵

Abraham's life is the story of a series of familial schisms. In addition to the events of Genesis 22, Abraham is pulled away from his Mesopotamian ancestral roots (12:1); he parts company with his beloved wife Sarah on two occasions (12:15; 20:3), and twice more with Hagar (16:6; 21:14); he breaks ties with nephew Lot (13:11); and also separates from his firstborn son Ishmael (21:14).

Each of these previous experiences, however, pales in comparison with Abraham's divinely appointed separation from his favorite son Isaac. Here Abraham is called to break the deepest of genetic and psychological bonds, that of father and son, father and future. The barrier being erected between them is not, as in the other cases, one of altered marital status or geography--it is the wall of death.

2.5 The Climax of the Abrahamic Faith Motif

The majority judgment of 20th-century biblical scholarship is that the speech of 22:15-18 is a late and loosely connected addition to the story of Abraham's test.¹⁶ However, a literary and thematic analysis suggests that far from being an awkward appendage to the story, it is in fact the keystone. In this four-verse section, three themes of fundamental significance not only to the story of Abraham, but also to the Pentateuch are brought to a climax. The first of these is the theme of Abraham's sacrificial, obedient faith.

Abraham's obedient faith was demonstrated at crucial moments throughout his life: in his movement from Haran at age 75 (12:4); in his trust in God's promise of countless offspring (15:6); in his joyous acceptance of God's assurance of a son from Sarah's womb (17:15-22; 18:10); and in his remarkable willingness to offer Isaac on the altar (22:3-14). But only in the last-mentioned event is the Lord actually quoted as commending Abraham for his faithful obedience. With this added touch at the climactic moment in Abraham's life, the narrator sets the final act of obedience on a pedestal above the others, giving it

¹⁵ My appreciation is expressed to Prof. J. H. Walton for the suggestion to include this section.

¹⁶ Westermann, 355, 363; Skinner, 331; von Rad, 242-43. But see W. Brueggemann (*Genesis: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* [Atlanta: John Knox, 1982] 186), for an alternative position.

a prominence that was apparent even to the NT writers centuries later (Heb 11:17-19; Jas 4:21).

2.6 The Climax of the Abrahamic Blessing Motif

In his speeches to Abraham, God used a form of the word "bless" seven times.¹⁷ The first five were utilized in God's first recorded statement to Abraham; the sixth and seventh occurrences were found in God's last words to Abraham. The concluding theophany affirmed the essential twofold thrust of the blessing statements of 12:2-4: Abraham would be blessed by God, and all nations on earth would derive a blessing from him. The promise, so bright in the beginning, had been preserved untarnished through Abraham's incredible obedience.

2.7 The Climax of the Abrahamic "Possess the Land" Motif

A pivotal theme in the story of Abraham, and certainly in the Pentateuch as well, is that God would give the promised land to Abraham's descendants. The concept first appeared in 12:7 and was repeated by God on four additional occasions within the Abraham cycle (13:14-17; 15:7-21; 17:8; 22:17). The most militant and triumphant of these passages is the final one. Though brief, the reference is clear and pointed: reception of God's gift of the land would require the use of force on Israel's part. Israel would have to fight the battles, but God had already settled the outcome of the war.

3. Implications of the Study

Results of the previous study suggest two truths: first, that narrators have at their disposal a number of means by which they may guide the attention of their audiences. Skillful employment of these means permits writers to maintain a significant degree of control over the messages which their audiences receive from the texts. Incumbent upon a writer is the responsibility to drop hints in the text sufficient to permit a literate audience to retrieve the intended messages being deposited by the author. A primary responsibility of the audience is to identify and correctly interpret the lexical, grammatical, and semantic clues left by the creator of the text.

Second it is clear that the use of artificial intelligence resources presently available today can yield contributions to the science and art of interpreting the Bible. While the role that artificial intelligence

¹⁷ Gen 12:2, two times; 12:3, three times; 22:11, one time; 22:18, one time.

plays is at present small and supportive, the potential within the foreseeable future looms large indeed. As the fields of language, philosophy, and psychology continue to clarify the marvelous mechanics of human communication, computer programs utilizing these insights can be written that efficiently read and interpret language. And we need not fear these probable inevitabilities. Rather, let us eagerly await these hearing aids, await them as a race of hearing-impaired sinners desperately needing to hear the voice of God in his Word.

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TRINJ 19 NS (1998) 139-162

THE FOUR MOST IMPORTANT BIBLICAL PASSAGES FOR A CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENTALISM

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RIBBLESDALE

EARTH, sweet Earth, sweet landscape, with leaves throng
 And louched low grass, heaven that dost appeal
 To, with no tongue to plead, no heart to feel;
 That canst but only be, but dost that long--

Thou canst but be, but that thou well dost; strong
 Thy plea with him who dealt, nay does now deal,
 Thy lovely dale down thus and thus bids reel
 Thy river, and o'er gives all to rack or wrong.

And what is Earth's eye, tongue, or heart else, where
 Else, but in dear and dogged man?--Ah, the heir
 To his own selfbent so bound, so tied to his turn,
 To thriftless reave both our rich round world bare
 And none reck of world after, this bids wear
 Earth brows of such care, care and dear concern.

--Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

I. INTRODUCTION

In the upper reaches of Michigan's lower peninsula near the small town of Mancelona stands the Au Sable Institute, an evangelically based education center for promoting a Christian environmental stewardship. The philosophy of the Au Sable Institute reads in part as follows:

The Board, faculty, and staff of the Au Sable Institute confess that God is owner of all. Humankind is not the owner of that over which it has authority. Human authority is more that of trustee than owner. The scope of this trust is global. Since all creatures depend on the earth for life, health and fulfillment, stewardship is

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the responsible use and care of creation. This is a clear and repeated testimony of Scripture.¹

It is the purpose of this article to focus exclusively on this clear and repeated biblical testimony. While previous articles in this series have attended to scientific, political, and historical dimensions of the environmentalism issue there has been as yet no closely focused examination of biblical material on the issue in this venue.²

It is not as though no biblical attention has been paid elsewhere. There is an encouraging recent growth in both the amount and the quality of writing addressing environmentalism from a more purely scriptural perspective.³ Much of this material, however, has arrived in the form of book-length treatments or collections of essays each dedicated to various parts of the biblical witness. It is our belief that it will prove useful to Christian teachers, and especially pastors, to have a more compact and more easily accessed treatment of the most essential biblical materials. Hence our focus on the "most significant" passages.

In their article "Evangelicals and Environmentalism: Past, Present, and Future," Grizzle, Rothrock, and Barrett share the results

¹As quoted in W. Granberg-Michaelson, ed., *Tending the Garden: Essays on the Gospel and the Earth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) vii. The present author has no formal connection with the Au Sable Institute.

²Some may argue that the sequence here is backwards. In his excellent earlier article "Bridging the Gap: Christian Environmental Stewardship and Public Environmental Policy" (Trinity Journal 18NS [1997]), F. Van Dyke speaks of writings which focus primarily on the biblical and theological dimensions of environmental stewardship as a "constructive first step" (p. 142). A few pages later he adds, "As Christian witness in environmental stewardship has matured beyond merely articulating what the Bible and Christian tradition say about the care of God's creation, so this maturity has taken tangible form on many fronts. These have included the production of writings by Christians with deliberate implications for environmental policy" (p. 150). Late in his article and as something of a thesis, Van Dyke states, "Ultimately, the reason and logic of the Christian position must be based not on biblical data only, but on sound and original study, supported by the Christian community, of the basic properties and behaviors of ecosystems, and by a clear and first-hand understanding of the technical application of management practices toward the solution of environmental problems" (p. 168). Clearly Van Dyke's concern is with public policy, and so I understand his reference to a "Christian position" to be a "position" assumed in the process of formulating public policy and encouraging specific public action. Given this understanding, I agree with his thesis and applaud its intent. But leadership in such public thought and action is the responsibility of relatively few people. For Christians more broadly considered whose responsibility it is to think and behave in a Christian manner, the "reason and logic" of their Christian position (i.e., world view) must be unapologetically grounded in biblical data only and simply find corroboration in professional scientific study. Thus our present effort.

³See, for example, Granberg-Michaelson, *Tending the Garden*; C. B. DeWitt, ed., *The Environment and the Christian: What Can We Learn from the New Testament?* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991); F. Van Dyke, D. C. Mahan, J. K. Sheldon, and R. H. Brand, *Redeeming Creation: The Biblical Basis for Environmental Stewardship* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996). Mention should also be made in this connection of the charming pictorial booklet, ideal for family use, *The Garden of God: Selections from the Bible's Teaching About the Creation* (Colorado Springs: International Bible Society, 1992).

of a national survey of pastors in which the participants were asked, "What are the most important obstacles to further development of an effective philosophy of creation that involves appropriate environmental concern and action by evangelicals?" The most cited "obstacle" (identified by well over half the participants) was "the lack of teaching and preaching on the environment, particularly the failure to develop a robust theology of the creation."⁴ This lament is voiced repeatedly by those committed to getting a responsible Christian presence felt in our society as it addresses issues of environmental concern.⁵

It is therefore the intention of this article to be something of a primer for pastors and teachers who have a desire to include as a part of their larger ministry of public instruction and encouragement, truth concerning mankind's responsibility before God toward his creation (a desire we would want to encourage in all pastors and teachers) but who to date have not had the opportunity adequately to study and process the potentially overwhelming amount of material dedicated to the subject. In short, this article gathers and begins to operationalize the foundational biblical thought necessary for a faithful Christian proclamation regarding the environment.

At this point it may be necessary to address a fundamental question. Why is it important to preach and teach this? Shouldn't we concentrate our limited time on the more pressing concerns of the gospel and Christian life? While the "environmental issue" is one of particularly poignant current concern about which Christians should be able to think and speak from within a Christian perspective, if for no other reason to engage in potentially productive discussion, if it is considered separately, as some interesting topic, it does pale in comparison to the importance of other Christian categories. It is only when it is seen as of a piece with our larger responsibility before God that it assumes the place of something worthy of our time and careful consideration. A piece of history from the environmentalism debate will be instructive for us here.

Soon after the emergence of "environmentalism" as a movement, accusations were leveled against Christianity, blaming it for the current ecological crisis.⁶ As a Christian voice began to be raised on the issue of environmentalism, much time was spent refuting these accusations. It now appears that those accusations, at least in some scholarly quarters, are being retracted. However, at least some Christian writers were willing to own some blame. In response to the attempt by some Christian writers to place the blame at the feet of

⁴R. E. Grizzle, P. E. Rothrock, and C. B. Barrett, "Evangelicals and Environmentalism: Past, Present and Future," *Trinity Journal* 19NS (1998) 21-2.

⁵See, for another example, Van Dyke, et al., *Redeeming Creation*, 148, 175-6.

⁶Most notably, though by no means exclusively, by L. White Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155 (March 10, 1967) 1203-7. There is an almost obligatory reference to this article in virtually every Christian treatment of the issue.

irresponsible Christians in order to protect Christianity as a set of ideas, James Nash insisted,

It will not do to draw a neat distinction between Christianity and Christendom, between the faith itself and perversions of it by its practitioners. That distinction may be formally or logically true, as I agree, but it is facile and unconvincing when applied to history. We cannot so easily distinguish between the faith and the faithful.⁷

Despite Nash's warning, my attempt in what follows is to focus on "the faith" as set forth in the Scriptures, independent of its practice by Christians. By so doing I am seeking to contribute to a more faithful expression of true Christianity by those who call themselves Christian. The fact that many Christians have become captive to a world view that unduly elevates economic progress makes it absolutely necessary for Christian pastors and teachers to address the matter head-on-and for better or worse the issue of environmental stewardship is integrally involved in this clash of world views. Thus, preaching and teaching a Christian environmentalism can, in our day, play a significant role in facilitating the movement of people away from lives of self-interest and toward an earnest devotion to a Christian way of life, and must occupy a place in the total teaching of Christians to pursue and honor the accomplishment of the purposes of God in his earth. The mandate to care for the earth, a mandate fundamental to man's being and seminal in his relationship to God, has not been abrogated. Environmental stewardship is therefore a matter of both Christian obedience and Christian piety. And, it is our confidence that a clear and straightforward teaching is presented in Scripture upon which morally responsible teaching and action can be based.⁸

Before we look at the biblical passages chosen it may be helpful to speak a word regarding the selection process. There is an almost inexhaustible number of passages which might be treated in connection with a discussion of a Christian environmentalism. The Psalms alone are filled with references to God as Creator and in relationship to his creation. The Prophets contain repeated references to the network of issues related to justice and human greed, a major one being that of land use. Many biblical writers, in both Old Testament and New, speak with an eye toward a future in which the transformation of creation figures largely. However, within this abundance, a fairly well-defined canon of Scriptures emerges which

⁷J. Nash, *Loving Nature: Ecological Integrity and Christian Responsibility* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1991) 72.

⁸That H. P. Santmire does not share this optimism is suggested by the title of his book *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985). See especially pp. 8-9. I am proceeding under the conviction that the Bible does provide clear instruction regarding our responsibility toward creation from which principles instructive for thought and life can be legitimately inferred.

provides, though in basic form, a complete theology of creation. While other passages will be referred to in the discussion, the four passages selected are sufficient to the task.

II. THE FOUR BIBLICAL PASSAGES

A. *Psalm 104*

One might expect an attempt to articulate a biblical Christian environmentalism to begin with Genesis 1 and its majestic statements of the foundational truth that God is the Creator. While that truth deserves pride of place, we will use Psalm 104 to highlight it. For in this psalm we find not only the assertion of the truth that God created the world but also the expression of corollary truths such that the psalm presents a more fully developed picture of the relationship that exists between God and creation. Thus it brings the reader to a more heightened awareness of the response appropriate to the foundational truth it declares.⁹ It might even be argued that if one had to choose but one passage to support a Christian environmentalism it should be this psalm; and if one had to choose but one verse it would be Ps 104:24. "How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures."

The contribution of Psalm 104 might be summarized as follows:

1. God created the earth and all things in it, and he continues to sustain the earth and all things in it by the loving exercise of his sovereign power.
2. The earth and all things in it belong to God by virtue of his creative work, and all things find their reason for being fundamentally in relation to him.
3. The earth and all things in it were created perfectly--each creature in itself and the entire creation in its interrelatedness.
4. Even after the entrance of sin into the created order this perfection still shines through so as to be perceivable by man. Thus, creation continually bears witness to the perfections of God and promotes in man praise toward God.

While the foundational truth of God's creative work operates as an underlying assumption throughout most of Psalm 104, there are a few places where the psalmist explicitly asserts it (e.g., vv. 5-6), and

⁹There is a fairly obvious structural parallel between Psalm 104 and the creation account in Genesis 1. This parallelism supports our decision, for it argues that Psalm 104 is a self-conscious attempt to interpret and flesh out the Genesis account. For an analysis of this parallel, see, for example, D. Kidner, *Psalms* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1975) 368.

at a moment of culmination in the psalm he breaks out with the passionate declaration to God, "*Thou* hast made. . ." (v. 24). Clearly, the heavens and earth exist as a result of the exercise of God's sovereign creativity. The unique emphasis of this psalm, however, is on God's sustenance of his creation. "He makes springs pour water. . . . He waters the mountains. . . . He makes grass grow. . . . The trees of the Lord are well watered" (vv. 10, 13, 14, 16). And after providing a representative cataloging of some animal denizens of forest, mountain, badlands, and sea, the psalmist summarizes, "These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time" (v. 27). All creatures are completely dependent on God. When God provides, his creatures are satisfied (v. 28). When he "hides his face," they are terrified (v. 29). When God sends his "Spirit," there is new life (v. 30). When he takes breath away, life ceases (v. 29). Here is a significant extension of the Genesis account. Yes, creation exists only because it was called into existence by God. But it continues to exist only because of the continuous care of its Creator.

Second, growing out of this primary claim of the text is the implication of theocentricity in creation. By virtue of having been created by God, all creatures belong to him. They are, says our psalmist, "your possessions" (v. 24); "*his* works" (v. 31). "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters" (Ps 24:1-2; emphasis added). But not only have all creatures been created *by* God, they have been created *for* God as well, and thus they find their primary reason for being with reference to him. This is a point of no small significance in the current discussion regarding environmentalism.

That God finds pleasure in his creation is a consistent testimony of Scripture. It is this that motivates the psalmist's desire, "May the Lord rejoice in his works" (v. 31). But can it be said that this pleasure of God in his non-human creatures is a sufficient explanation for their being? It is one thing to find pleasure in something that exists. It is another thing to say a thing exists for that reason.

There is no question that creation exists, at least in part, for the purpose of nourishing mankind. "He makes. . . plants for man to cultivate-bringing forth food from the earth: wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart" (vv. 14-15). But does this reference to man exhaust the non-human creatures' reason for being? Or, to ask it positively, does non-human creation find any reason for being, independent of man? Psalm 104 suggests it does. Before we examine that suggestion, however, it will prove useful to consider the opposing position.

Representative of this position is Thomas Sieger Derr, who willingly describes himself as an "unreconstructed" anthropocentrist.¹⁰ Derr is positioning himself vis-a-vis the

¹⁰T. S. Derr, J. A. Nash, and R. J. Neuhaus, *Environmental Ethics and Christian Humanism* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996) 17.

biocentrism which dominates much of secular environmentalism and which holds "nature" or "the life process" as the primary value. Against this, Derr is reasserting the conviction that man is decidedly above nature and that nature exists to sustain human life.¹¹ As a "Christian" humanist Derr is quick to add that man is made for God but he is adamant ("unrepentant" he says) in his anthropocentrism. Man's needs are a sufficient explanation for the existence of non-human creation.¹²

While Derr, and others like him, are right in distancing themselves from the biocentrism of secular environmentalism for explicitly religious reasons, their mistake is in not distancing themselves far enough. Derr would no doubt affirm a theocentric world view, but within that world view, I would argue, there needs to be a theocentric view of non-human creation.¹³ Nature certainly was made with man in mind but man's needs are an insufficient frame of reference entirely to explain creation.¹⁴ Only God can supply such a frame of reference.

Our psalm, along with other passages (Job 38-41 in particular), speak to the fact that creation does not exist solely for the sake of man. In his speech to Job, God clearly implies that some creatures exist simply for his own delight.

Look at the behemoth,
which I made along with you
and which feeds on grass like an ox.
What strength he has in his loins,
what power in the muscles of his belly!
His tail sways like a cedar;
The sinews of his thighs are close-knit.
His bones are tubes of bronze,
His limbs like rods of iron.
He ranks first among the works of God.
(Job 40:15-19)

While God may not be chuckling gleefully as he provides this description, it is evident that he is taking great delight in a prize

¹¹Ibid., 23-8.

¹²A virtually identical stance is taken by E. C. Beisner in the article which appeared earlier in this series, "Imago Dei and the Population Debate," *Trinity Journal* 18NS (1997) 173- 97.

¹³Derr does acknowledge the possibility of some value in creation beyond human nourishment, but he is unwilling to speculate as to exactly what that value is, "not being privy to the mind of God" (*Environmental Ethics*, 140, cf., p. 23). I will argue that, because of the presence of certain passages in our Bibles, it is not necessary to speculate.

¹⁴One might be more attracted to this position if by "man's needs" was meant more than just food and shelter. Certainly man has a need to have his soul uplifted, and we know that God created the heavens and the earth in part to achieve that very purpose (see Psalms 8 and 19). However, even with this expanded definition of human need, it remains an inadequate frame of reference satisfactorily to explain the reason for creation's existence.

creation and is happy to point out "how utterly and awesomely useless (to us) are some of the creatures he has made."¹⁵ After extending his point by means of a similar description of "leviathan" (41:1-10), God emphatically declares, "Who has a claim against me that I must pay? *Everything under heaven belongs to me*" (41:11; emphasis added). Against Job's presumption God is graciously offering the reminder that he does not owe man anything. While somewhat less dramatically, our psalm makes a similar point.

The trees of the Lord are well watered,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
There the birds make their nests;
the stork has its home in the pine trees.
The high mountains belong to the wild goats;
the crags are a refuge for the coneys.
You bring darkness, it becomes night,
and all the beasts of the forest prowl.
The lions roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.
The sun rises, and they steal away;
they return and lie down in their dens.
There is the sea, vast and spacious,
teeming with creatures beyond number-
living things both large and small.
There the ships go to and fro,
and the leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.
(vv.16-18, 20-22, 25-26)

Here we are shown that it is not just man's needs, certainly not his physical ones, that explain God's manifold creation.¹⁶ Apparently God has a vital interest in scurrying pikas, nesting storks, tiny marine creatures, and the prowling nocturnal animals of the deep forest and jungle. He has given them each appropriate shelter and he

¹⁵Yan Dyke, et al., *Redeeming Creation*, 49.

¹⁶Of particularly charming interest is this reference to a frolicking "leviathan" (probably in this case a cetacean). One might argue, especially upon observing the great benefits that several human cultures have derived through whaling, that the primary reason for the existence of whales is the provision of food for man. Certainly God has provided for man in this way. But what is this reference to frolicking? The word translated "frolic" speaks of laughter and merry-making-sporting whales of all things. Of what value is that to man, especially considering all the frolicking that goes on out at sea unobserved by human eyes? (That man in his ships has the occasional opportunity to observe such sporting is only another blessing of God.) It should also be remembered in this connection that having already brought the entire animal kingdom into being God then told Adam and Eve that every plant and fruit-bearing tree was theirs for food (Gen 1:29). That God made the same provision for the animals only highlights the fact that animals were not on the menu. Of what practical use to man were the wild animals during the period up to God's declaration to Noah that "now" meat was for eating too (Gen 9:3)?

satisfies their bellies with "good things" (v. 28). And all this interest is for the creatures' own sakes without reference to man's physical sustenance.¹⁷ In fact, the psalmist makes a point of drawing a sharp line between the economy of these beasts and the economy of man. "The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God. The sun rises, and they steal away: they return and lie down in their dens. Then man goes out to his work, to his labor until evening" (vv. 21-23; emphasis added). A life unrelated to the needs of man is forever going on. Therefore, any ardent anthropocentrism must be radically, perhaps categorically, qualified. Though man is undeniably the focus of God's creative and redemptive work there is an almost overwhelming fecundity to life that simply cannot be explained by reference to human nourishment and comfort. Again, only God can supply an adequate frame of reference. It is precisely this theocentrism that will rescue us from the greed or indifference that ; so easily invade an anthropocentric view. Keeping God at the center of the universe will help us to behave.

The third major contribution of Psalm 104 has to do with the perfection of God's creation. It is in v. 24 that this emerges most powerfully. "How many are your works, O Lord! *In wisdom* you made them all" (emphasis added). This reference to divine wisdom operating in the making of "all" of God's creatures speaks of the perfection inherent in each different species. Every animal and plant species that exists owns perfection as a result of the exercise of God's wisdom in creation. John Calvin wrote,

God has been pleased to manifest his perfections in the whole structure of the universe. . . . On each of his works his glory is engraven in characters so bright, so distinct, and so illustrious, that none, however dull and illiterate, can plead ignorance as their excuse.¹⁸

But the conceptual pressure from the larger message of the psalm tells us that not only was each individual species made perfectly but that God's wisdom is seen in the perfection of the way individual species relate to each other to form biotic communities occupying well-defined life zones.

¹⁷The beginnings of an argument for a Christian environmentalism are found here. Since God loves and cares about these creatures, and since being a Christian means embracing and reflecting God's values, then it follows that we too should care for these creatures. Nash puts it this way: "Ethically, since fidelity to God implies loyalty to divine valuations and affections, we are called to image the values of the ultimate Valuer--indeed, to mirror the love of Christ toward all God's beloved, not only humanity" (*Environmental Ethics*, 108). This should not be read to imply that we love non-human creatures equally with humans. Instead the quality and quantity of our love should "mirror" that of God's. This way, as Nash more succinctly puts it, "Respect for biotic interests. . . is theocentric respect for the biotic values of God" (p. 109).

¹⁸*Institutes of the Christian Religion* (2 vols.; ed. J. T. McNeill; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977) 1.4.2.

He makes springs pour water into the ravines;
 it flows between the mountains.
 They give water to all the beasts of the field;
 the wild donkeys quench their thirst.
 The birds of the air nest by the waters;
 they sing among the branches.
 The trees of the Lord are well watered,
 the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
 There the birds make their nests;
 the stork has its home in the pine trees.
 (vv.10-12,16-17)

This careful ordering of ecosystems is, says the psalmist, a demonstration of divine genius.

Closely related to this third contribution, in fact flowing out of it, is the fourth, which speaks of the impact of the perfection of the creation upon man. By the time the psalmist took up his pen, sin had long since invaded Eden and left its mark upon creation. Of this the psalmist is not unaware. He speaks of prowling lions roaring for their hapless prey (v. 21). He knows that terror and death are common among man and beast (v. 29). He does not avert his eyes from the destruction of earthquake and volcano (v. 32). He openly acknowledges the existence of wicked men (v. 35). He sees that nature is, in fact, "red in tooth and claw." Nonetheless, he observes creation and cannot restrain his praise.

 Praise the Lord, O my soul.
 O Lord my God, you are very great;
 you are clothed with splendor and majesty. (v. 1)

 How many are your works, O Lord!
 In wisdom you made them all. (v. 24)

 May the glory of the Lord endure forever. (v. 31)
 I will sing to the Lord all my life;

 I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. (v. 33)
 Praise the Lord, O my soul.
 Praise the Lord. (v. 35)

Despite the intrusion of sin and its marring effects there remains a powerful and clearly visible witness in creation to, as the apostle Paul puts it, the "eternal power and divine nature" of God (Rom 1:19-20). The heavens still declare the "glory of God" and the skies still proclaim his "handiwork" (Ps 19:1). Particular characteristics of God are revealed in his works. The author of Psalm 104 could actually *see* evidence of God's wisdom and wealth. Therefore he is

drawn to praise God for these specific attributes. Herein we see the doxological value of creation.¹⁹

Psalms 104 presents more than just propositional truth. It models for us the response appropriate to our discovery of God's manifest presence in creation. As God's people are moved to cry "Glory!" when they observe the thunderstorm approach from over the Mediterranean (Ps 29:3-9); as Solomon is awestruck as he watches one of God's eagles soaring the thermals (Prov 30:18-19); so should we respond with appropriate humble praise when creation points us beyond itself to an all-wise almighty God.

There are clear environmental implications here. If "all" of God's works were made with wisdom, then each one has the ability to speak to man of that wisdom. Thus every loss of species is a diminution of man's opportunity to observe the perfection of God. In John's vision of the heavenly throne he hears the elders sing to the Lord, "You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, *for* you created all things" (Rev 4:11; emphasis added). Any destruction of creation removes from man a cause for giving honor to God. Every species, every ecosystem, reveals the wisdom of God and thus exerts a powerful doxological influence.²⁰ We must remember that God also told at least all the birds and all the marine creatures to "be fruitful and *increase* in number" (Gen 1:22; emphasis added). Thus we must find a way to co-exist with these creatures in a mutual fruitfulness, one which recognizes and honors the wisdom of the Lord and lets "all things, their creator bless."²¹

¹⁹John Calvin captures this so marvelously when he speaks of creation as "this most beautiful theatre" of God's works (*Institutes* 1.14.20).

²⁰To this doxological influence might be added an evangelistic influence. Aldo Leopold, the beloved patron saint of the environmental movement, was not without religious leanings and a certain level of biblical literacy. In his journals he wrote, "What value has wildlife from the standpoint of morals and religion? I heard of a boy once who was brought up an atheist. He changed his mind when he saw that there were a hundred-odd species of warblers, each bedecked like to the rainbow, and each performing yearly sundry thousands of miles of migration about which scientists wrote wisely but did not understand. No 'fortuitous concourse of elements' working blindly through any number of millions of years could quite account for why warblers are so beautiful. No mechanistic theory, even bolstered by mutations, has ever quite answered for the colors of the cerulean warbler, or the vespers of the wood thrush, or the swansong, or--goose music. I dare say this boy's convictions would be harder to shake than those of many inductive theologians. There are yet many boys to be born who, like Isaiah, 'may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this.' But where shall they see, and know, and consider? In museums?" (*Round River: From the Journals of Aldo Leopold* [Minocqua, WI: Northword, 1991] 246).

²¹Derr's backhanded dismissal of efforts to protect endangered species by reference to two(!) cases of marginal relevance is both surprising and disturbing (*Environmental Ethics*, 72). That habitat depletion and fragmentation at the hands of human greed are endangering species is an incontestable fact. What is even more disturbing is this statement made in reference to environmental choices we face: "There is, moreover, very little of specifically or uniquely Christian content to such decisions" (p. 76). For that to be true the word "Christian" would have to have a very slim definition indeed.

B. Genesis 1-2

Given the fullness of Psalm 104 and its unique relationship with the opening chapters of Genesis, we will find, as we turn to those chapters, that much of their ground has already been covered. Thus we will treat a good part of the contribution of Genesis 1-2 in a more brief and summary form. There is one contribution of these chapters, however, which stands, in order of importance, second only to the statement that God is the creator of the universe. A primary concern of theology, much more, of a Christian environmentalism, must be that of determining mankind's proper place and role before God in the context of creation. It is in addressing this concern that Genesis 1-2 delivers its greatest value.

The contribution of Genesis 1-2 might be summarized as follows:

1. God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them.
2. All that which God created he pronounced good, i.e., it existed exactly as he intended it.
3. Of all his creation God created only man in his own image, thus causing man to occupy a position distinct from and above the rest of creation.
4. God blessed both human and non-human creation by imbuing both with powers of procreation and encouraging both to exercise those powers liberally.
5. God gave to mankind the responsibility of mastery over non-human creation, and he commanded him to exercise that mastery toward the preservation of, and fuller realization of, creation's goodness.

With reference to the first of these truths, not much more can be said than what Gen 1:1 so starkly announces out of the silence: "In the beginning God created. . . ." As many have observed, the profundity of these first five words of Scripture is almost without comparison. Only the great biblical statements of God's redemptive act, as found in places like John 3:16 and Rom 5:8, match the magnitude of this opening claim of the Bible. The first two chapters of Genesis give us two well known accounts of the creation history, each with a measure of detail, but their first truth is that all creation came into being because God called it into being.

God's creative activity was not without intentional design. When the Genesis account so regularly communicates God's observation of the "goodness" of his work (vv. 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31), it is telling us that things have turned out exactly as God wanted them. This is not to suggest to the reader of the account that some other possibility existed, i.e., that God might have botched it. These references to creation's goodness are not primarily there as a commentary on the quality of God's creativity and power. These things are assumed.

The references are there simply to tell the reader, and rather emphatically, that the creation perfectly is what God intended it to be. Each thing stands in its proper relationship to God, and each thing glorifies God by being exactly what God intended it to be.²²

What did God intend creation to be? While the answer which Genesis 1-2 supplies to this question does not account for the entirety of God's intention for creation, it does speak very concretely of a specific part of God's intention. Apart from its repeated use throughout Genesis 1, which we have already noted, and apart from its use in the designation "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," the word translated "good" appears only twice in its positive sense (cf. the "not good" of Gen 2:18) in Genesis 1-2, and these two occurrences tell us something about God's intention for creation by telling us something about how creation is "good."

"Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground-trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food" (Gen 2:8, 9). Clearly the writer of Genesis wants us to understand that these trees God made to grow in Eden were designed with man in mind. He very intentionally made the fruit of those trees to be visually attractive to the human eye, tasty to the human palate, and nourishing for the human body. A few verses later we read that there is gold in the land of Havilah where the river Pishon flows and that "the gold of that land is good" (v. 12). Two other mineral substances are subsequently named, and each of these three substances has the distinction of being considered highly valuable by man. These things (and in particular the gold) are "good," the clear implication being that they are good by virtue of their usefulness to man.

By these two more casual references to the goodness of certain parts of creation the author of this account gives us some understanding of God's design for creation. God intended at least some parts of creation to be specifically for human nourishment and use and these parts are good in that they are what God intended them to be.²³

The third significant contribution of Genesis 1-2 begins to move us in the direction of defining man's unique role in creation. While we will deal more fully with that specific role below it is necessary here to establish the distinctiveness of human creation. Robert Meye, in his essay "Invitation to Wonder: Toward a Theology of Nature,"²⁴

²²It is this that explains passages like Psalm 148, where all of creation, including "lightning and hail, snow and clouds, . . . mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, kings of the earth and all nations, . . . young men and maidens, old men and children" (vv. 8-12), is seen as capable of praising God.

²³About the intention of some other parts of creation and about the intention of creation as a whole we have already spoken under our treatment of Psalm 104.

²⁴In Granberg-Michaelson, *Tending the Garden*, 30-49.

observes several details from the Genesis accounts which serve to highlight the uniqueness of man.

1. Creation on the sixth day, after all other creative work had been accomplished (Gen 1:31).
2. The unique language with which the divine decision to create [man] is announced. Instead of the impersonal imperative "Let there be," there is a divine statement in the first-person plural: "Let us make man in our image. . ." (Gen 1:26).
3. The creation of humankind in the image of God (Gen 1:27).
4. The special emphasis upon human creation as community: "Male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27).
5. The unique manner in which humans, male and female, are formed-the former from the dust of the ground, with the breath of life breathed directly into his nostrils (Gen 2:7); the latter with a rib taken from the side of Adam (Gen 2:21-22).
6. The granting to humankind of dominion over all things including all animals, no matter how strong or grand they might be (Gen 1:28).
7. Humankind's being granted the responsibility of naming the animals, which are brought before Adam by God himself (Gen 2:19-20).
8. Above all else, God's direct relationship with and address to humankind as the unique crown of creation (Gen 1:28ff.; 2:16ff.).²⁵

It is by virtue of this uniqueness and distinction, especially as represented in the *imago Dei*, that man finds himself "a little lower than God and crowned with glory and honor" with "all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea" put "under his feet" (Ps 8:5-8). To the implications of this position we will return momentarily.

But first a brief word about the fourth contribution of Genesis 1-2. It has already been observed that God's command to "be fruitful and increase in number" was spoken not just to man.

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "*Be fruitful and increase in number*

²⁵Ibid., 28. This is not Meyers' complete list.

and fill the water in the seas and let the birds increase on the earth." And there was evening and there was morning-the fifth day.

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. (Gen 1:20-25)

The persistently repeated reference to each "kind" of animal tells us that God's blessing and his earnest encouragement continually to produce offspring was addressed to individual species. The writer takes pains to let us know that God clearly had every "kind" in mind. God blessed, he states, "every winged bird according to its kind." Unless we want to accuse God of duplicity, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that it is possible for man to be fruitful and multiply and each animal species to be fruitful and multiply at the same time. One should not negate the other. On the contrary, part of man's responsibility is precisely to preserve the God-intended fullness of creation. Historically what has stood in the way of this preservation is man's wrongful exercise of his dominion, a subject to which our passage now bids us turn.

The discussion of man's role and responsibility toward creation grows out of two well-defined moments in the Genesis narrative.

Then God said, "Let" us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." (Gen 1:26-28)

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. (Gen 2:15)

It is clear from these passages, especially the first, that man has been given some form of supremacy over the rest of creation. What is in question is the nature and purpose of that supremacy. Proponents of some form of Christian environmentalism have rightly accused their detractors of focusing too exclusively on the "dominion" passages in Genesis 1 and failing to honor the contribution of Genesis 2. On the other hand, some Christian environmentalists have been guilty of a too quick conflation of these texts, such that "have dominion" has been made to equal "take care

of."²⁶ While certainly Gen 2:15 should inform our understanding of Gen 1:26-28, it needs to be noted that these two passages are not addressing the exact same point. Each needs to be understood on its own terms, and each needs to be given freedom to make its contribution to the larger issue of man's responsibility toward creation.

In their historical overview of the relationship between the Christian church and environmentalism, Grizzle, Rothrock, and Barrett list the "subjectionist perspective" as that which has defined the church's stance toward the environment for most of its history. They suggest that this position derives its primary inspiration from Gen 1:28, seeing it as "a call to bring the non-human environment into subjection for the purpose of facilitating human expansion."²⁷ While clearly the terms "rule" (*rada*) and "subdue" (*kabas*) speak of mastery, and clearly these words spoken to man make of man a creature of singular status commissioned to exercise a God-given authority, the subjectionist position is, just as clearly, a result of misinterpreting these words. The call to rule over and subdue creation simply cannot bear the meaning "strong, forceful subjugation,"²⁸ given the context in which these words are spoken. God told Adam and Eve to "fill the earth and subdue it" by which he meant that man should exercise his God-given authority (i.e., "rule") over the earth as he gradually came to occupy more and more of it. And certainly, especially after the Fall, some of this exercise of authority would have to find expression in "forceful subjugation," for after the curse the creation would possess a resistance to man's dominion.²⁹ But it is one thing to exercise physical and technological prowess over a garden or a cow or a grouse or a trout. It is something very different to "rule" in this way over all "the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Just how does one "forcefully subjugate" the great host of neo-tropical warblers?³⁰ How the Arctic Tern with its almost unbelievable pattern of migration? And why would one want to?

²⁶While pointing out a case of the first error, S. Bouma-Prediger comes dangerously close to committing the second. See his, "Is Christianity Responsible for the Ecological Crisis?" *Christian Scholar's Review* 225 (1995) 149-50.

²⁷"Evangelicals and Environmentalism," 6.

²⁸This is Beisner's conclusion in "Imago Dei and the Population Debate," 184.

²⁹I am somewhat surprised by Beisner's apparent assumption that even before the Fall, creation is "something whose spontaneous tendency is to resist dominion" (ibid., 185). I believe Van Dyke is more accurate when he says, speaking of God's instruction to Adam to subdue the earth, "In a world without sin, we are not unkind to Adam to point out that this would have been neither a difficult nor an unpleasant task" (*Redeeming Creation*, 91).

³⁰While at first this brings to mind an exercise in futility, it is becoming increasingly clear that man can, indirectly, exercise that kind of power. But it is necessarily destructive of the creatures in view, and the Bible defines that kind of dominion as sin.

Not all of creation was created with man's physical needs in mind, and so significant portions of creation will not require this kind of subjection. And, as we've already observed, God's aim in Job 40-41 is to point out precisely our inability in many cases to rule in this way. Yet God clearly tells Adam to "rule" over *all* the creatures. While that rule may, and does, include some exercise of physical and technological force, clearly it speaks of something larger than that. Those who equate "dominion" with "subjugation" have committed the logical error of mistaking a part for the whole.

What then is meant by God's instruction to man to "rule over" creation? Fundamentally it is an announcement of the conferral of authority. Man is to act as the head of the household and is responsible to see that the household runs well and that all members of the household continue to function according to their God-appointed roles. While the exercise of that authority does include the freedom to use creation appropriately to sustain and nourish human life, man must not so exercise his authority as to be harmful to God's intentions for all creation. In fact, he must sometimes exercise his authority to protect and preserve God's creatures from human subjugation. His job, in short, is to function as God's steward and as such to continue to keep what God has created in conformity with his purposes and will for that creation. It is not primarily for our own well-being that we rule over creation but for God.³¹

Theologian and OT scholar William Dyrness has provided helpful direction in our effort to define human dominion. First, he makes the observation that the commission of the man and the woman to have dominion over creation must be understood in the context of God's ordering of the world to be fertile and productive, and his encouragement to man to enjoy that particular goodness. Second, he explores the meaning of the command to "rule" by comparing it to the demands placed on Israelite kings. He writes:

Since the word ["rule"] is that generally used of the rule of a king, I believe the key is to be found in the unique conception of "rule" that is developed in the Old Testament and that is specifically applied to Israel's kings. Deuteronomy 17:14-20 points out that Israel's king is to rule as a brother over brothers and sisters, is not to accumulate large amounts of gold, . . . Here is an organic rather

³¹There is, as one might expect, a persistent anthropocentrism operating within the subjectionist position. Indeed, they are virtually synonymous. Hence, Derr, even though he is willing to use a term like "stewardship," defines it as "preserving this world as a habitat fit for humanity" (*Environmental Ethics*, 32). "The steward's task," says Derr, "is responsible development" (p. 22) and it is clear that by development he means that which better serves mankind. The line between appropriate use and exploitation is a hard one to fix and an even harder one upon which to find wide agreement. For this reason I have a deep reluctance to affirm the use of the word "development" in an attempt to define stewardship, especially given what the word connotes in our day and even more because of the damage done to the environment at the hands of human "development." Again, if we could factor human greed out of human development we would be on safer ground.

than strictly monarchical view of kingship and ruling, . . . The rule that men and women are to exercise over creation, then, is one of servanthood, as a brother or sister "rules" over others in the family.³²

Then, bringing his two ideas together, he summarizes:

If my thesis--that human dominion is best seen in the ideal rule of Israel's king-is valid, then we should expect that the righteous rule of the king would issue in a productive and fruitful environment, both human and nonhuman. And in Psalm 72, the great hymn of praise for the righteous king, this is precisely what we find:

Endow the king with your justice, O God,
the royal son with your righteousness.
He will judge your people in righteousness,
your afflicted ones with justice.
The mountains will bring prosperity to the people,
the hills the fruit of righteousness. . . .
Let grain abound throughout the land;
on the tops of the hills may it sway.
Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon;
let it thrive like the grass of the field.
(vv. 1-3,16)

This rule is both a reflection of God's own righteous rule and an expression of God's purposes for all who bear his image and exercise his dominion. . . . Clearly, goodness and fertility are assumed to be natural characteristics of the earth, and the man and the woman are merely to facilitate and enjoy this bounty.³³

In a similar vein, essayist Wendell Berry has supplied a helpful categorization. He speaks of two possibilities in man, "exploitation" and "nurture." Because of the usefulness of these terms to our present discussion I will allow Berry to develop his idea completely.

Let me outline as briefly as I can what seem to me to be the characteristics of these opposite kinds of mind. I conceive a strip-miner to be a model exploiter, and as a model nurturer I take the old-fashioned idea or ideal of a farmer. The exploiter is a specialist, an expert; the nurturer is not. The standard of the exploiter is efficiency; the standard of the nurturer is care. The exploiter's goal is money, profit; the nurturer's goal is health--his land's health, his own, his family's, his community's, his country's. Whereas the exploiter asks of a piece of land only how much and how quickly it

³²W. Dyrness, "Stewardship of the Earth in the Old Testament," in Granberg-Michaelson, *Tending the Garden*, 53.

³³*Ibid.*, 54. So tied is man's exercise of dominion to the preservation of creation-wide fertility that God set down laws by which his people were to maintain an ecological sensitivity in their cultivation of the earth. The instruction to give the land a Sabbath rest (Lev 25:1-5) is only the best known of these laws.

can be made to produce, the nurturer asks a question that is much more complex and difficult: What is its carrying capacity? (That is: How much can be taken from it without diminishing it? What can it produce dependably for an indefinite time?) The exploiter wishes to earn as much as possible by as little work as possible: the nurturer expects, certainly, to have a decent living from his work, but his characteristic wish is to work as well as possible. The competence of the exploiter is in organization; that of the nurturer is in order--a human order, that is, that accommodates itself both to other order and to mystery. The exploiter typically serves an institution or organization; the nurturer serves land, household, community, place. The exploiter thinks in terms of numbers, quantities, "hard facts"; the nurturer in terms of character, condition, quality, kind.³⁴

Berry's comments serve as something of a parable for us. When God commanded man to "rule over" creation he commanded him to do so as a nurturer, not as an exploiter.

It is in the light of this understanding of Gen 1:26-28 that the more specific responsibility given to Adam as recorded in Gen 2:15 makes most sense. Adam is placed in the garden to serve (*'abad*) and preserve (*samar*) it. He is, in other words, to exercise his dominion over the garden by managing it so as to preserve it, to enable it continually to achieve those purposes God has for it. Thus his dominion is one of service, serving-cultivating and protecting--the creation and thereby serving the creation's owner.

C. Gen 9:8-17

The contribution of Gen 9:8-17 is single and simple but essential to a Christian environmentalism.

God has established an everlasting covenant with all living creatures of every kind wherein he has promised never again to destroy them by the waters of a flood.

The covenant contained in Genesis 9 is usually understood as presenting a promise to Noah and his family and through them to all their descendants. In fact, theologians are wont to refer to this as the Noachian covenant. It would be more aptly designated as the Creation covenant, for in it God makes abundantly clear that his promise is for every living creature.

Perhaps the most striking formal feature of the covenant is the remarkable density of repetition. In the space of these ten verses there are eight occurrences of the word "covenant," three references to the "sign" of the rainbow, three repetitions of the promise to "never again destroy by flood." Propositionally speaking, the entire

³⁴W. Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1977) 7.

passage could be reduced to the space of one verse without any loss of content. The actual length of the covenantal pronouncement is due to a prolixity of passionate emphasis, and the thing that is emphasized above everything else is that this covenant is made with "all life" (*kol basar*), with "every living creature" (*kol nepes hahayya*). Nine times God reiterates this point, and it is clear from the emphasis they receive and the positions these reiterations occupy that God wants the point to be clear.

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with *every living creature* that was with you--the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you--*every living creature* on the earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will *all life* be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and *every living creature* with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and *all living creatures of every kind*. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and *all living creatures of every kind* on the earth." So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and *all life* on the earth."

As Steven Bouma-Prediger observes, "This everlasting covenant, God's first and original covenant--before the covenants with Abraham or Moses or David--is with *all* creation."³⁵

Clearly God is communicating through this covenant that all creation matters to him and that it is his determination to preserve it without diminution. And as the covenant speaks of God's solemn intention to preserve creation, it also begins to communicate, in an anticipatory way, his intention to redeem creation. Here someone may protest and accuse me of over-interpretation. After all, the covenant merely promises that there will never again be destruction by flood. Further extrapolation is unwarranted. But the covenant does speak beyond its own explicit promise. At minimum it says that God sees bird and beast as worthy of covenantal protection. He is not reluctant to group them with humans under one covenant. This itself speaks more broadly than the limits of the specific promise might at first suggest. But, more than that, it can be legitimately inferred that this covenant is representative of God's long-term intention ultimately and finally to redeem all of creation. This is an "everlasting covenant" (*berit 'olam*)-like the ones made with

³⁵"Is Christianity Responsible for the Ecological Crisis?" 153.

Abraham and with Israel--a "covenant for all generations to come." It would seem strange for God to make such a covenant to preserve creatures from destruction by water and to express that covenant so poignantly, only to let them be destroyed by some other means. If it tells us anything, Gen 9:8-17 tells us that in God's covenantal economy, the destiny of every living creature is somehow linked with ours. It is precisely this point that the apostle Paul picks up in our final passage.

D. Rom 8:18-23

While it is in the climactic movement of the final chapters of Revelation that the hope of Christian environmentalism finds its most poetic and perhaps most eloquent expression, it is in Paul's letter to the Romans that the theological context for that hope is most clearly set forth. The primary contribution of Rom 8:18-23 can be summarized as follows:

1. Nonhuman creation was cursed by God as a consequence of man's sin. This curse has profoundly affected all of creation by keeping it from realizing God's original intention for it.
2. However, the condition in which creation presently exists is temporary, for at some point in the future, in connection with the glorification of the children of God, all of creation will be set free from the curse and the ongoing effects of man's sinfulness and will enjoy a glorious renewal of its ability to be as it was created to be.

The controlling reference point for Rom 8:18-23 is, without question, the fall of man into sin as recorded in Genesis 3. It is this that provides both the historical and theological context for our passage. When Paul tells us that "creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it" (v. 20), he is making a somewhat veiled but no less certain reference to God's chilling judgment on Adam recorded in Gen 3:17: "Cursed is the ground because of you." Though Paul simply refers to "the creation" in his first three references to it (vv. 19, 20, 21), in his fourth reference he speaks of "the whole creation" (v. 22) and by so doing communicates that no part of creation has been left unaffected by man's sin.³⁶

Paul presents two specific consequences of this curse on creation. First, creation was "subjected to frustration" (v. 20). We have already

³⁶By "creation" Paul refers to all of sub-human nature, both animate and inanimate. For an overview of the history of exegesis on this point and a defense of the conclusion here stated see C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975, 1978) 411-2.

observed that when God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in the earth he did so with specific intentions for his creation. In his cursing of creation God is purposefully frustrating his own intentions such that creation is kept from fulfilling the purpose of its existence. Creation therefore groans as a woman painfully and precariously halted in childbirth. But more than just being halted in the realization of the purpose of its existence, creation also finds itself falling apart in the meantime. It is in "bondage to decay" (v. 21), the very opposite of its original condition of fertility and good health. In short, creation was devastated by man's sin.

And as man continues to sin he continues to bring havoc on creation, both by his own direct action and by inviting the judgment of God. This is the consistent witness of the OT prophets.

Hear the word of the Lord, you Israelites, because the Lord has a charge to bring against you who live in the land: "There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. Because of this the land mourns, and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying." (Hos 4:1-3)

"I will sweep away everything from the face of the earth," declares the Lord. "I will sweep away both men and animals; I will sweep away the birds of the air and the fish of the sea. The wicked will have only heaps of rubble when I cut off man from the face of the earth," declares the Lord. (Zeph 1:2-3)

"My people are fools; they do not know me. They are senseless children; they have no understanding. They are skilled in doing evil; they know not how to do good." I looked at the earth, and it was formless and empty; and at the heavens and their light was gone. I looked at the mountains and they were quaking; all the hills were swaying. I looked and there were no people; every bird in the sky had flown away. I looked and the fruitful land was a desert; all its towns lay in ruins before the Lord, before his fierce anger. (Jer 4:22-26)

Especially in this last passage, with its haunting references to the creation narratives of Genesis, we face the specter of the possible undoing of the physical world because of sin. The consistent testimony of Scripture is that creation suffers and is out of whack as a result of man's sinfulness.³⁷ It is in "eager anticipation" of its "liberation" from these consequences that creation presently "waits,"

³⁷This fact forces us to a more nuanced understanding of human stewardship which: 1) takes into consideration the cursedness of creation; and 2) recognizes that to the duty of preserving creation must be added the duty of restoring creation.

and it is to this future redemption of creation that Rom 8:18-23 speaks most eloquently.³⁸

The images Paul uses to speak of this future redemption are powerfully emotive: the removal of an absolutely frustrating encumbrance, liberation from a killing servitude, the successful completion of a seemingly endless travail. But it is in his phrase "glorious freedom" (v. 21) that Paul strikes the most potent chord, for here he speaks of the return of creation to a state in which it can once again freely and perfectly fulfill God's purpose for it and by so doing participate in the general glory which will one day be revealed, not only in us, but as the controlling characteristic of Christ's eternal kingdom. Creation personified sees its destiny as inextricably linked with ours. On the day when we are revealed as sons of God (v. 19), and glory is revealed in us (v. 18), the day when our bodies are redeemed (v. 23), creation too will experience redemption at the hands of the one "by [whom] *all things* were created" and "through [whom] *all things*" will be reconciled to God (Col 1:16, 20).

III. CONCLUSION

This article began with a poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins which laments man's carelessness toward the earth. It ends with another Hopkins's poem which speaks, even in the face of the appropriate and serious concern enjoined by the first, an optimism which arises out of a God-centered confidence that creation will not be a casualty of human history but instead will be ultimately renewed under God's tender redemptive care.

GOD'S GRANDEUR

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like the shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

³⁸It is important to point out that Paul's primary focus in Rom 8:18-25 is on the coming glory of believers and the confident expectation they can have in that future hope. However, one simply cannot dismiss the concern with creation in this passage. There is a theological perspective which wants to do this. Representative of this perspective, which limits the history of redemption to the history of human redemption, is Derr, *Environmental Ethics*, 31-2. For a fuller representation and critique of this perspective see Santmire, *The Travail of Nature*, 3-7.

And for all this, nature is never spent:
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs--
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! Bright wings.

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WOMAN'S DESIRE FOR MAN: GENESIS 3:16 RECONSIDERED

IRVIN A. BUSENITZ

Lexical and etymological studies of the words of Gen 3:16b yield little help for interpreting the meaning of the woman's desire for man. Contextual evidence, however, indicates that the woman's desire for the man and his rule over her are not the punishment but the conditions in which the woman will suffer punishment. Although there are linguistic and thematic parallels between Gen 3:16b and Gen 4:7, contextual differences and interpretive problems indicate that Gen 4:7 cannot be used to interpret the meaning of "desire" in Gen 3:16. Cant 7:10[11] provides a better context for understanding the word. It may be concluded that, in spite of the Fall, the woman will have a longing for intimacy with man involving more than sexual intimacy.

* * *

INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH in the past few decades there has been a proliferation of books and articles discussing biblical norms for the role of women both in society and in the church, a consensus of interpretation has not emerged. The complexity of the issue, coupled with the exegetical difficulty of relevant Scripture, has made general agreement elusive. Part of the discussion has focused upon the last phrase of Gen 3:16: "yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."¹

Various interpretations have been propounded for the meaning of this phrase, centering primarily around the definition of "desire." One prominent interpretation suggests that, as a punishment for the Fall, a woman's desire will be subject to her husband's. "Her desire, whatever it may be, will not be her own. She cannot do what she wishes, for her husband rules over her like a despot and whatever she wishes is subject

¹ All biblical quotations from NASB unless otherwise noted.

to his will."² Another viewpoint contends that the woman will have an immense longing, yearning, and psychological dependence.³ More recently a third view has surfaced. It suggests that, based on the usage of "desire" in Gen 4:7, the woman will desire to dominate the relationship with her husband. "The woman's desire is to control her husband (to usurp his divinely appointed headship), and he must master her, if he can."⁴

LEXICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Hebrew term rendered "desire" is **רָשָׁה** and is derived from **רָשָׁה**. It is given the general lexical meaning of "attract, impel, of desire, affection";⁵ however, due to its infrequent occurrence in the OT (Gen 3:16; 4:7; Cant 7:10[11]),⁶ the semantic range is unclear. The etymological data is equally obscure. The word may be related historically to the Arabic *saqa* (which is often used in contexts indicating sexual desire) or *saqa* (which is used in a more general sense of desire).⁷ Nevertheless, *saqa* does not demand sexual connotations and *saqa* does not rule them out.⁸ In light of its usage in Gen 4:7, the term appears to have a meaning which is broader than sexual desire.

Perhaps the translators of the LXX attempted to clarify their understanding of the term by translating it with **ἀποστροφή** in Gen 3:16 and 4:7, but with **ἐπιστροφή** in Cant 7:10[11]. The preposition **ἀπό**, when attached to the verb **στρέφω**, suggests "to turn away," while **ἐπί** suggests "to turn toward." However, it is difficult to understand

² E. J. Young, *Genesis 3* (London: Banner of Truth, 1966) 127; cf. John Calvin, *Genesis* (reprint; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979) 172, who contends that 3:16b is an example of Hebrew poetry in which a thought is restated in a subsequent phrase. As such, "and he shall rule over you" is a reassertion of "your desire shall be to your husband."

³ Gini Andrews, *Your Half of the Apple* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972) 51; cf. H. C. Leupold, *Genesis* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977) 1. 172.

⁴ Susan Foh, "What Is the Woman's Desire?" *WTJ* 37 (1975) 382; cf. also Foh's *Women and the Word of God* (reprint; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980) 69.

⁵ BDB, 1003. The definition given by Koehler and Baumgartner (KB, 1. 1043) is similar: "impulse, urge."

⁶ The significance of the term as used in these three passages is treated below. The number in brackets refers to the versification of the Hebrew text.

⁷ Foh (*Women*, 67) seeks to remove any sexual connotation from "desire" in 3:16b by contending that "the phonemic equivalent of the Hebrew **רָשָׁה** [ש of **רָשָׁה**] is **s** in Arabic. The proper etymology in Arabic for **רָשָׁה** is *saqa*, to urge or drive on. This meaning need not have sexual connotations."

⁸ In either case, etymology is often of little help in ascertaining meaning, which is determined by context and usage.

how Gen 4:7 could embody any idea of "turning away."⁹ Furthermore, the terms are virtually synonymous in meaning in noun form,¹⁰ so that the change in prepositional prefix is "unconvincing"¹¹ as an interpretation and "quite unnecessary."¹²

The *Tg. Onq.* translates the term with תִּתְאַבֵּק, which means "to desire, long for." While it does not occur in the Aramaic portions of the OT, its Hebrew equivalent is recorded in Ps 119:20: "My soul is crushed with longing [תִּתְאַבֵּק] after Thine ordinances at all times."

The other terms used in Gen 3:16 are even less helpful (when treated individually) for determining the meaning of the text. The verb "to rule," from מָשַׁל, is employed both here and in 4:7. The LXX translates the term in 3:16 with κυριεύω, which means "to lord it over,"¹³ but uses a verb form of ἄρχω ("to rule over"¹⁴) in 4:7, possibly to depict a more governmental, autocratic concept. Similarly, little significance can be attached to the interchange of the prepositions (3:16; 4:7) and לְ (Cant 7:10[11]). The Hebrew language frequently employs the two prepositions interchangeably, with apparent indiscrimination.¹⁵

Ultimately, the effort to achieve exegetical clarity cannot be propelled by lexical or etymological information, for the data revealed

⁹ The same should be said of Gen 3:16 also, for even understanding to mean a desire for domination and control does not essentially incorporate a "turning away" concept.

¹⁰ The meaning assigned to both terms in BAGD (100, 301) is "to turn toward."

¹¹ John Skinner, *Genesis* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1969) 83.

¹² U. Cassuto, *The Book of Genesis* (2 vols; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1978) 1.166.

¹³ Some have contended that κυριεύω connotes the idea of establishing one in an office over another. If this were true it would suggest that the husband was not installed in the "office" of leader/headship until after the Fall. Yet 1 Tim 2:12-14 implies that the role of headship was divinely ordained prior to the fall. Equally untenable is the following analysis: "This is obviously neither an intensification nor a warping of a pre-existing hierarchy between the sexes for no such hierarchy is alluded to" (Victor P. Hamilton, "קָשַׁל," in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Bruce K. Waltke, and Gleason L. Archer, Jr. [2 vols; Chicago: Moody, 1980] 20 913). While Genesis 1-3 does not specifically refer to a preexisting hierarchy, it is alluded to in a multiplicity of ways in the opening chapters. Examples include the purpose of woman's creation (2: 18) and the naming of woman (2:23). Furthermore, it is specifically stated elsewhere in Scripture that a hierarchical structure between man and woman antedated the Fall (1 Tim 2:12-14; I Cor 11:3-12).

¹⁴ BAGD, 113.

¹⁵ Cf. BDB, 41. Numerous examples of this interchange exist in the OT (e.g., I Sam 1:10, 26; I Sam 25:25). While the "physical motion toward" idea of לָא can also encompass the concept of "against," as it does in Gen 4:8, it is made evident only by the context. Since such a thought is not inherent in the context of 3:16, one should not be too quick to read the idea of "against" back into it.

by such is dim and inconclusive. Lexically and etymologically, the term שֹׁקֵט is shrouded in obscurity; the verb מָשַׁל and the prepositions אֶל and עַל are equally impotent to unlock the meaning of Gen 3:16.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

While the study of each of the terms does not shed much light on the meaning of Gen 3:16, the context does. In Gen 3:15 the mention of woman serves as a point of transition to v 16 where the Lord pronounces judgment upon the woman. A similar connection is provided between v 16 and v 17; the mention of the husband in v 16b allows for a smooth transition to the judgment pronounced upon the man in vv 17-19.

The first thing to be noted by the context is the fact that each recipient of God's judgment receives one punishment. In the case of the serpent (3:14), he would move on his belly: similarly, Satan (3:15) receives one judgment--a death blow administered by the seed of the woman.¹⁶ In the judgment upon man (3:17-19), the ground will not readily yield its fruit. In Gen 4:11, Cain too is the recipient of only one punishment. Consequently, in 3:16 woman is probably the recipient of only one judgment.

Second, in each of the judgments which God pronounced in Gen 3:14-19 and 4:11-12, the nature of the curse has no essential relationship to the nature of the sin committed. The ground not readily yielding its fruit has no essential relationship to Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit; the fact that the serpent would now crawl on the ground has no integral connection to his enticing conversation with the woman. Consequently, one should not assume that the woman's punishment is to be sealed forever under the control of her husband, because she stepped out of her divinely ordained role of submission and followed the admonition of the devil.

Third, the judgments given to the woman and the man (3:16-19) revolve around propagation and seed.¹⁷ "Both sentences involve

¹⁶ This argument follows the view that Satan is being addressed in v 15. It is doubtful that the term "enmity" (אֶי־בָּיִת) can be limited merely to a hostility between man and beast, for elsewhere the term is employed only of enmity between morally responsible agents (cf. Num 35:21, 22; Ezek 25:15; 35:5). Furthermore, if the v 15 judgment refers to the serpent, then it is essentially no judgment at all, for animals in general exist under a similar relationship with man.

¹⁷ The opening statement of 3:16: "I will greatly multiply your pain and your conception" is probably a hendiadys--an idiomatic phrase referring to pain which results from pregnancy. In addition to the fact that it is doubtful if an increased fertility cycle would constitute a punishment, the next phrase combines the two thoughts: "in pain you shall bring forth children." Cf. Cassuto's suggestion (*Genesis*, I. 165) that "a better interpretation is: your suffering in general, and more particularly that of your child bearing."

pain/toil, and both affect the bringing forth of life, human and otherwise."¹⁸ The context speaks not of the desire of woman to rule the man but of the continuation of life in the face of death. Such is the central element of 3:16a. Such is the focal point of 3:17-19. Thus, there is good cause to believe that the same idea is present in 3:16b.

Fourth, in the contextual development of Genesis 3 the woman is specifically addressed in 3:16, while the man is the object of God's pronouncement of judgment in 3:17-19. If the "desire" of 3:16b is the desire of the woman to control and dominate her husband, then the sentence is no longer a judgment upon the woman; rather, it is the man who bears its brunt. Yet man's judgment is not mentioned until 3:17. "Since the punishment was specifically intended for the woman and her female descendants, and was not a penalty shared with the men, it had inevitably to be of a nature restricted to the female sex."¹⁹

Fifth, in each of the punishments the pronouncement is given first, then an explanatory statement follows. In the case of the serpent (3:14) the explanatory phrase is "And dust you shall eat all the days of your life." Serpents are not dust-eaters per se; rather, the phrase is an explanatory elaboration of the fact that they would crawl around on their bellies. In 3:15 the punishment is essentially enunciated in the phrase "And I will put enmity between your seed and her seed," with the subsequent phrase denoting the extent of that enmity, namely, death. In 3:17-19 the punishment directed toward Adam is the cursing of the ground (3:17a); 3:17b-19 is explanatory, describing how this punishment would affect Adam and his descendants.²⁰ The same is true in 3:16; the last phrase must be closely related contextually to the punishment recorded in 3:16a. Since each of the explanatory statements in 3:14, 3:15, and 3:17-19 is inseparably linked to the judgment statement, it would be exegetically inadvisable to divide 3:16 into two separate, unrelated punishments. Rather, 3:16b is elaborating on 3:16a. The "desire factor" is not a part of the judgment but an explanation of conditions and relationships as they will exist after the Fall. Even though the intimacy between the first man and his wife was abrogated,²¹

¹⁸ Foh, *Women*, 67. The judgment of both the woman and the man affects their physical being. For the woman, pregnancy and childbirth will be accompanied by great hardship and toil. The judgment on man will also involve hard labor (note the same word [כָּאֵץ = pain] used in both 3:16 and 3:17).

¹⁹ Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1. 164.

²⁰ Cf. Gen 4: 11-12 where the punishment of Cain is a further cursing of the ground (4:11), while the statement that he would be a vagrant and wanderer on the earth (4:12) is an explanation of the judgment, describing the extent and impact of it.

²¹ God's words in Gen 3:16b do not "destroy the harmony of marriage" (Foh, "Woman's Desire," 383), for such harmony was broken earlier (cf. "his wife" of 2:24, 25; 3:8 with "the woman" and the phrase, "which You gave to me, she gave. . ." in 3:12). Though Eve is later called "his wife," the initial intimacy appears to be gone.

even though the unity with man would bring woman to the threshold of death itself in the process of childbirth" yet woman would still possess a strong desire to be with man. The broken intimacy and the pain in childbearing would not be allowed to nullify the yearning of woman for man and the fulfillment of God's command to populate the earth²² or to alter the divine order of the headship of man.

It is equally tenuous to maintain that the phrase "and he shall rule over you" was given because Eve had usurped the authority and leadership role of Adam when she took and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The sin of the first woman was not that she took the lead without seeking the prior counsel of Adam. No such prior consultation was needed, for she herself knew God's commandment prohibiting them from eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:17). The woman's sin was that she exalted herself above her Creator. She took it upon herself to determine, together with the counsel of the serpent, if God's law was good or bad, if it was right or wrong. Her sin had nothing to do with denying Adam his rightful role of leadership in their marriage or with grasping a role that belonged to her husband. The only role that Eve usurped was that of God's, a usurpation that is characteristic of all acts of sin of all people living in all times of the history of mankind. Woman may desire to dominate or rule over man, but it is not a part of the punishment pronounced upon woman; it is just the essence, character, and result of all sin against God. Self-exaltation and pride always result in the desire to dominate and rule. Every person to some extent desires to dominate and rule over others--not just woman over man.²³

GENESIS 4:7

One of the two passages most directly related to this discussion is Gen 4:7. While there are linguistic and thematic parallels between this verse and Gen 3:16, there are also differences. Furthermore, the

²² This element should not be dismissed too readily, for there is every reason to believe that the broken intimacy, together with the deadly pain of childbirth, would be sufficient to place the command to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth (1:28) in jeopardy (cf. also Gen 11:4, 9).

²³ The NT commands to submit to the husband's authority (Eph 5:22; Col 3:18; I Pet 3:1) do not suggest that woman's desire to rule over man is a part of the Genesis 3 judgment. These passages incorporate admonitions directing slaves to submit to their masters, children to obey their parents, and younger men to submit to their elders, indicating that nonsubmissive attitudes and actions are the result of sin. To be certain, women may seek to usurp authority not rightfully theirs. But it is an action which is the consequence of sin and not a result of the judgment of Gen 3:16.

interpretation of Gen 4:7 faces unique difficulties all its own.²⁴ Generally speaking, there have been two interpretations. The less common interpretation posits Abel as the antecedent of **תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ** ("his desire"), suggesting that if Cain does what is right, then he will be lifted up and restored to his position of preeminence which formed a part of his birthright as the older brother.²⁵ "From the latter clause of the verse it is evident that God alludes to the prerogatives of the birthright which Cain would be in no danger of losing if his conduct were such as it ought to be."²⁶ This interpretation embodies at least two favorable aspects. The first is contextual, for it readily accounts for the actions of Cain toward Abel in the following verse.²⁷ The second is grammatical, for in **תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ** ("his desire") the pronominal suffix is masculine. If the antecedent were "sin [**חַטָּאת**] crouching at the door," one would expect a feminine pronominal suffix, since **חַטָּאת** is feminine.

A more common understanding of Gen 4:7 is that sin, pictured as a wild beast, is waiting to pounce upon and control its victim. "The fem. **חַטָּאת** is construed as a masculine, because sin is personified as a wild beast, lurking at the door of the human heart, and eagerly desiring to devour his soul (1 Pet. v. 8)."²⁸ This view benefits from the closeness of the pronominal suffix ("his desire") to the antecedent ("sin crouching at the door"); yet, despite the personification of sin as a wild beast, it suffers from the discord of gender.

Regardless of which view one espouses, neither is sufficiently certain to allow it to become the basis for establishing the meaning of **שׁוּק** in Gen 3:16. It is readily admitted that there are some noteworthy similarities between Gen 4:7 and Gen 3:16. Both are given in a context of divine judgment. Both come from the hand of the same writer. Both employ similar terminology.²⁹ It is true that "the proximity of Genesis 4:7 to Genesis 3:16 suggests that a similar grammatical construction

²⁴ Many commentators readily admit that the verse is one of the most difficult in all of the OT to explicate. Skinner (*Genesis*, 107) has observed: "Every attempt to extract a meaning from the verse is more or less of a *tour de force*, and it is nearly certain that the obscurity is due to deep-seated textual corruptions." Suggested textual emendations are feeble at best and have generated little light.

²⁵ The term **שָׁאָה** ("lifted up") is used in Gen 49:3 in the sense of "preeminence." In this view "desire" would mean "to be subservient to" as to the firstborn of the family (cf. Gen 27:29).

²⁶ George Bush, *Notes on Genesis* (2 vols; reprinted, Minneapolis: James and Klock, 1976) 1.99.

²⁷ The disaffectionate relationship which developed between Esau and Jacob over the matter of birthright (Genesis 27) is significantly analogous.

²⁸ C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Genesis* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 112.

²⁹ Gen 3: 16: תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ	וְהָאִשָּׁה	וְהָאִשָּׁה	וְהָאִשָּׁה
Gen 4:7. וְהָאִשָּׁה	וְהָאִשָּׁה	וְהָאִשָּׁה	וְהָאִשָּׁה

would have similar meaning."³⁰ But since Gen 4:7 is besieged with interpretive uncertainties, it ought not to be applied unreservedly to interpret Gen 3:16.

Furthermore, Gen 4:7 is not as parallel to Gen 3:16 as it may appear. First of all, Gen 4:7 is figurative while Gen 3:16 is literal. Hermeneutically, one should proceed from the literal usage to the figurative usage if one's exegesis is to have validity.³¹ Second, while the grammatical construction is similar, the two phrases are actually inverted in sense. In 4:7 the object of the desire (Cain) is also the recipient of the curse. However, in 3:16 the object of the desire (the man) is not the recipient of the curse. For 3:16 to be truly parallel with 4:7, the desire of woman would have to be part of the judgment against the man. Third, similarity in grammar need not demand similarity of meaning. Verbal parallelism may be only coincidental. As shown above, the context of Gen 3:16 does not indicate that the woman desires to dominate her husband. If it is to be found in Gen 3:16, it must be imported from Gen 4:7. However, the context of Genesis 3 must be given the primary role in determining the meaning of "desire" in 3:16 rather than the linguistic resemblance between 3:16 and 4:7. The thematic links between Genesis 2-3 and Genesis 4³² neither suggest nor imply that, as a part of the judgment of Gen 3:16, woman will desire to dominate man. For example, in Genesis 2-3 there is intimacy between God and man; then sin turns that intimacy to alienation. There is intimacy between man and woman; then sin causes intimacy to become alienation. In Genesis 4, intimacy between God and Cain turns to alienation, and intimacy between Cain and Abel turns to alienation. But in each case the broken intimacy, alienation, and punishment are not allowed to go beyond God's intended extent.³³ In the example of Cain, his death would be strongly avenged (Gen 4:15). The thematic relationship suggests that such is the case in Gen 3:16b. The alienation between man and woman and the pain of childbirth resulting from intimacy, would not be allowed to interrupt woman's desire for man, man's rulership over woman, or the carrying out of the command to populate the earth (Gen 1:28).

CANTICLES 7:10[11]

Cant 7:10[11] contains the third Occurrence of the word **אֶשְׁכָּה**: "I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me." While the meaning of **אֶשְׁכָּה** may

³⁰ Foh, *Women*, 69.

³¹ It is difficult to perceive how one could determine how sin desires Cain and then utilize that as the basis for determining how woman desires man.

³² Cf. Alan J. Hauser, "Linguistic and Thematic Links Between Genesis 4:1-6 and Genesis 2-3," *JETS* 23 (1980) 297-305.

³³ Scripture is replete with instances of divinely established parameters in the punishment of mankind (cf., e.g., Exod 20:25; 21:23-25).

be difficult to determine precisely in its two previous occurrences, there is little doubt here. It speaks clearly of the natural power and compulsion of the love of an individual for another. The slightest hint of one desiring to dominate the other is totally absent. Says Zockler: "תְּשׁוּקָה" as in Gen. iii.16, the passage which lies at the basis of this, [speaks] of the longing desire of the man for the society of his wife, not of gross sensual desires for sexual intercourse. The whole is a triumphant exclamation in which Shulamith joyfully affirms that her lover cannot exist without her."³⁴

It appears that the usage of תְּשׁוּקָה in Canticles is closer to that of Gen 3:16 than is Gen 4:7, notwithstanding the latter's grammatical similarities and textual proximity. First of all, the plain must be employed to interpret the obscure and difficult if there are contextual reasons to believe that both usages are similar. Such is the case between Gen 3:16 and Cant 7:10[11]. The abundantly clear meaning of "desire" in Cant 7:10 [11] should be given priority in the determination of the meaning of "desire" in Gen 3:16. Second, "desire" is used literally in Cant 7:10[11], just as it is in Gen 3:16; in Gen 4:7 the usage is figurative.³⁵ Third, in distinction from Gen 4:7, both Cant 7:10[11] and Gen 3:16 address relationships between the opposite sexes. As such Cant 7:10[11] and Gen 3:16 share a contextual relationship which is foreign to Gen 4:7.

The true difficulty, then, is not understanding the meaning of "desire" as used in Cant 7:10[11] and Gen 3:16, but as it is used in Gen 4:7. This is noted indirectly by Skinner in his comment on Gen 4:7: "The word תְּשׁוּקָה is unsuitable, whether it be understood of the wild beast's eagerness for its prey or the deference due from a younger brother to an older."³⁶ The reason תְּשׁוּקָה is so unsuitable is because the other two usages speak of the power of attraction between the sexes. To grant Gen 4:7 in its obscurity a determinative role in the interpretation of Gen 3:16 without permitting the clarity of Cant 7:10[11] to permeate the exegetical process is to abandon hermeneutical discernment and propriety.

CONCLUSION

The central consideration in the interpretation of Gen 3:16b is context; the meaning of "desire" is best determined in the light of its

³⁴ Otto Zockler, *The Song of Solomon in Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, by J. P. Lange (tr. & ed. by Philip Schaff; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.) 119. The rendering "I am my beloved's, and it is an obligation upon me to desire him" is grammatically permissible, especially in light of a similar poetical use of אֶלַי in Prov 7: 14. However, it is doubtful on contextual grounds, for elsewhere the phrase "I am my beloved's" (6:3; cf. 2: 16) connotes reciprocity.

³⁵ Cf. BDB, 1003.

³⁶ Skinner, *Genesis*, 107.

immediate contextual setting. The context bespeaks procreation and the continuation of life, not the desire to dominate. Furthermore, to appeal to Gen 4:7 with its manifold obscurities to unlock the interpretive door of Gen 3:16 is to throw exegetical caution to the wind. It is much safer to apply the meaning of *תִּשְׁקֶה* in Cant 7:10[11] to Gen 3:16, for while it does not enjoy the near proximity of Gen 4:7, its meaning is plain and its interpretation is virtually unquestioned. Consequently, it should be granted preeminence over Gen 4:7 and become the primary cross-reference in ascertaining the meaning of "desire. "

The text does not sustain the interpretation that one aspect of the woman's judgment is that she will desire to dominate and control the man. The last phrase of Gen 3:16 is not a part of the judgment; it is an explanation and description of conditions which will exist after the fall. Thus, the last phrase could be translated: "yet you will still desire [as you did before the Fall, though now tainted by sin] your husband, and he will still rule [as he did before the Fall, though now tainted by sin] over you." The alienation, broken intimacy, and pain in childbirth resulting from the Fall will not be allowed to annul that desire nor abrogate the command to be fruitful.

In spite of the fact that man will rule over woman, and in spite of the fact that intimacy may result in the pain (and possible death) due to childbirth, yet woman will desire and yearn for man. The issue is broader than purely sexual but does not exclude the sexual element. This interpretation does not imply that woman's sexual drives are stronger than the man's. While it is generally concluded that the man has the stronger sexual desire, such is to be expected, for there was nothing in the judgment upon man to temper it. On the other hand, the woman must deal with the pain of childbirth; thus it is to be expected that the woman's sexual desires would be somewhat moderated. Nevertheless, woman's desire for man is an attraction which cannot be uprooted from her nature. The contention that "sin has corrupted both the willing submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband"³⁷ is unquestionably true. But it is a natural consequence of sin, not a result of God's judgment on the woman in Gen 3:16! Just as the sin-corrupted headship of the husband is not a part of the divine judgment upon the man but a consequence of sin, so the sin-corrupted submission of the wife is not a part of the judgment; it is the result of sin.³⁸

³⁷ Foh, *Women*, 69.

³⁸ While some may contend that the women's liberation movement of recent years does not corroborate this interpretation (Foh, *Women*, 67), the opposite may actually be the case. Many of the women who speak out strongly against the headship of man nevertheless do get married and do bear their husband's children. Certainly it cannot be maintained that this interpretation is contrary to the broader historical perspective.

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IS THERE AN ALTERNATIVE TO ORGANIC EVOLUTION?*

JAMES O. BUSWELL, III

I

For over one hundred years there has been a continuous controversy, between evolutionists and anti-evolutionists over the body of data and theory of the origin, antiquity, and development of life and of man. While the controversy has been continuous, it has by no means been uniform. For a long time each dogmatically defended positions of some truth mixed with considerable error, in violent and fruitless debate, whose brilliance was in many cases mostly oratorical or literary. As the factual and scientific aspects of the evolutionary position increased and became more widely accepted, however, the bases for the anti-evolutionary or creationist¹ opposition remained comparatively constant, with the result that, while the anti-evolutionists continued to actively oppose the evolutionist position, their attacks were less and less frequently reciprocated. Finally the evolutionist's entanglements with anti-evolutionists dwindled to an occasional defense or debate, the last of which of any consequence in this country was the famous Scopes trial of 1925. Interaction still persists in the British Commonwealth, however, chiefly due to the seemingly tireless efforts of the Evolution Protest Movement with active branches in London, Australia, and New Zealand.

Quite another pattern also emerges from a general review of this question. It is quite evident that in the view each has taken, and still takes of the other, whether in opposition or reaction, there is a tremendous degree of ignorance as to progress made in the past hundred years. The creationist exhibits in almost all of his anti-evolutionary literature an antiquated, "moth-ball" variety of "ever onward, ever upward" conception of evolutionism reminiscent of the latter nineteenth century, while the evolutionist on his part tends to identify all creationists with an immutability of species - deluge geology -- Ussher chronology type of position, sometimes referred to as "hyperorthodox", or "hyper-traditionalist."²

* This article constitutes part of Mr. Buswell's chapter in the forthcoming book, *One Hundred Years After Darwin*, scheduled for publication by Eerdmans in the late spring.

1. For present purposes other "anti-" evolutionary views like neo-Darwinian, or neo-Lamarckian, or other variations within scientific circles are ignored.
2. The term "hyperorthodox" has been recently brought into prominence by Dr. Bernard Ramm (1954: 27-31 et passim). Because of its relationship to the terms "fundamentalist" and "orthodox" and because of rather consistent objection

The complicating factor in all this is that while the anti-evolutionist is wrong in his usual appraisal of evolution today, the creationist position is still widely represented by the hyper-traditionalist point of view, from which has split a Creationist group which seeks to keep itself up-to-date scientifically while adopting a non-evolutionary rather than

to its use, it should be clearly defined and its usage clarified. The term "fundamentalist" is today the most widely known label for the Bible-believing creationist in scientific circles. It is important, however, to understand the crucial distinction between at least two meanings of this widely misused term:

Fundamentalism originally referred to the belief that there are certain great truths in Christianity, which, if changed, would dissolve Christianity. Each Christian is allowed personal conviction in respect to a great number of doctrines and interpretations but that personal liberty is hedged about by key infallible and eternal doctrines. This is the term in its historic and good sense. The movement included such stalwarts as James Orr, J. Gresham Machen, Benjamin Warfield, W. H. Green and the numerous contributors to the famous Fundamentals papers.

In more recent years another movement has given the word an odious connotation. Alen with much zeal, enthusiasm and conviction, yet lacking frequently in education or cultural breadth, and many times individualistic, took to the stump to defend the faith. Many times they were dogmatic beyond evidence, or were intractable of disposition, or were obnoxiously anti-cultural, anti-scientific and anti-educational. Hence the term came to mean one who was bigoted, an obscurantist, a fideist, a fighter and an anti-intellectual [Ramm 1955: 131].

The creationist position which this paper attempts to advance is to be identified with the first, and not the second meaning of "fundamentalist" as defined above. It is fully recognized, however, that all creationists who do not agree with this position are not automatically considered in the second category.

It is abundantly clear from his discussion of the matter (1954) that Ramm is employing the term "hyperorthodox" to refer to this second brand of fundamentalist so as not to perpetuate the "odious connotation" with the term. Ramm's reason for this is that

we can sin to the right as well as to the left. Patriotism can degenerate into jingoism and enthusiasm into fanaticism and virtue into prudishness. It is possible not only to have slack theological views, but have views far more rigid and dogmatic than Scripture itself. Hyperorthodoxy in trying to be loyal to the Bible has developed an exaggerated sense of what loyalty to the Bible means [1954: 291].

He evidently got the term from J. W. Dawson, who, he points out (1954: 28), referred to "pedantic hyperorthodoxy" in evangelical apologetics in 1877.

Certain objections to my use of the term have been raised, however, chiefly upon the basis of a possible mis-identification of this position with sound, theological orthodoxy. Thus the alternatives "distorted orthodoxy" and "blind orthodoxy" have been suggested. Even more significant, perhaps, is the objection to the form of the term itself. Thus the Rev. John Buswell, my brother, wrote me, "Can anyone be hyperorthodox? Is not orthodoxy an ultimate-in one sphere anyway? In other words, many would regard 'hyper-orthodox' as they would 'hyper-straight' or 'hyper-sterilized.' "

Since these objections, and others, seem to have some value, I have chosen to use instead the term "hyper-traditionalist" suggested by my colleague, Professor Joseph Free. Although a bit more cumbersome, this term carries none of the theological associations invariably attached to "orthodoxy" and "fundamentalism", and seems in addition to refer a bit more precisely to those who being bound by tradition, prefer to retain the peripheral, relative, and changeable interpretations with the fundamental truths, without being able to distinguish the difference.

an anti-evolutionary position. It is this position which the modern evolutionist has tended to overlook, and which constitutes the alternative to organic evolution that I wish to set forth here.

The hyper-traditionalist position, however, is the most often heard, though seldom listened-to, expression of creationism. Thus it is not without reason that G. G. Simpson could dispense with a consideration of creationism in a public lecture in Philadelphia in 1950 with words to the effect that "creationists are found today only in non- or anti-scientific circles."

One of the chief drawbacks to the anti-evolutionists, from Darwin's early critics to the present day, familiar as some of their leaders are with the data, is that their activities and literature have been almost completely wrapped up in arguments over petty fragments of the record, assuming that to attack evolution as a total philosophy one must show the data upon which the assumptions are based to be untrue. Instead of offering a positive, non-evolutionary interpretation of the data themselves, they have been guilty of treating them with scorn and sarcasm for no other reason than that the evolutionist has done something with them first.

What results is that both parties claim to have truth on their side and at the same time charge the other with falsity and ignorance. The creationist attacks the evolutionist's total philosophy from the standpoint of revelation, while the evolutionist answers with scientific data. Since the evolutionist is seldom caught up in an argument over revelation, the creationist is inevitably drawn to argue on the evolutionist's own ground in terms of genetic processes or paleontological remains, where he is generally over his depth. This anti-evolutionary position has been characteristically negative and unscientific in spite of its strong adherence to the scriptural fundamentals of the historic Christian faith.

II

Now to a consideration of the non-evolutionary creationist position. There are three major areas to consider, each with its relevant body of evidences and various interpretations. They are:

- a. The origin of life.
- b. The origin and age of man.
- c. The processes of development since their origin.

The consideration of these areas is not simply a question of whether evolution" or "creation" is the exclusive explanation. Organic evolution is so inclusive and so complex a system that it must be broken down into its constituent elements. This may be attempted on various levels of abstraction. One of the most obvious and important steps which can

be taken is a separation of the consideration of *origins* from the consideration of *process*. I have the impression that British evolutionists are perhaps oftener involved in considerations of origins than are American evolutionists. The American, at least in anthropological circles, tends to leave questions of the origin of the earth and of life to the astronomers, physicists, and biologists on the one hand, or to the philosophers on the other. William Howells has stated the position thus:

We are totally bewildered, of course, about the beginnings of life and the reasons for our existence, and these are questions which have been grist to the mills of philosophers and myth-makers alike. But we know, roughly, what happened along the way, and that is the story of human evolution [1944:3].

Considerations of process, then, make up the major concerns of the evolutionist. Therefore let us postpone the consideration of origins to another context.

I find Simpson's three "modes" or aspects of evolution extremely useful for purposes of analysis, and comparison with the Creationist position. The first of these is speciation or "splitting" which, as Simpson points out, "is almost the only mode accessible for experimental biology, neozoology, and genetics. It embraces almost all the dynamic evolutionary phenomena subject to direct experimental attack." The second mode Simpson calls "phyletic" evolution, which "involves the sustained, directional (but not necessarily rectilinear) shift of the average characters of populations. It is not primarily the splitting up of a population, but the change of the population as a whole." While speciation may be called an explanation for races, species, and sometimes genera, Simpson points out that the phyletic mode "is typically related to middle taxonomic levels, usually genera, sub-families, and families." He also observes that "nine tenths of the pertinent data of paleontology fall into patterns of the phyletic mode" (1944: 202-203).

Thus, although evolution does not consist of wholly distinct processes, and a fossil series, for example, can exhibit speciation, or splitting, in a phyletic pattern through geological time, nevertheless the well documented data of natural selection on these levels--the genetic and geological processes--may be abstracted from the over-all theory of organic evolution. It is the position of the creationist, at this point, that he can accept all of the facts within these two areas of consideration. Thus the creationist need have no quarrel with the transmutation of species or other taxonomic categories, and may fully accept the genetic explanation for variation. Similarly he may accept the evidence of the "evolution" of the horse, and other such well documented paleontological series, upon the basis of the adaptive dynamic interaction of genetic and environmental change called natural selection.

Turning to more anthropological matters, the creationist accepts the evidence for the age of prehistoric man and his culture. He has no quarrel with an antiquity of hundreds of thousands of years; there is nothing in the Bible to indicate how long ago man was created. The date of 4004 B.C. which has been an item of ridicule by evolutionists and a rallying point for the hyper-traditionalist, now finds itself a cultural survival, firmly ensconced in the notes on page 1 of certain editions of the Bible, but without a valid function in either modern Christian theology or chronology.

Neither has the creationist any quarrel with morphological features of ancient man. The Bible, which is the creationist's basis of belief and life, simply says nothing about what Adam looked like. And, although the creationist, Protestant and Catholic alike, must of necessity hold to the belief (which will be further discussed below) that there was a "first man," it is of no consequence whether he looked like a pithecanthropoid or a Caucasoid. Furthermore, if anthropological opinion swings in favor of calling some prehistoric types by separate specific or generic names, and other types *Homo Sapiens* with modern man, this is of relatively little consequence. For the creationist recognizes the arbitrary and non-qualitative nature of taxonomic categories and is not bound to equate any one of them with the "kind" spoken of in Genesis 1.

Thus the creationist looks on with the same interest, or relief, as any anthropologist, when a classic Neanderthaloid posture is straightened up, or a Piltdown forgery exposed. Here, of course, is a characteristic difference from the hyper-traditionalist reaction. When the Piltdown news hit the press early in 1954 the anti-evolutionist and many religious journals were full of "I told you so's" and another major pillar of evolution had fallen! One creationist on the other hand simply expressed "relief that one of the more perplexing riddles of man's prehistory is finally solved." Presumably the same sort of reactions can be expected once Professor Strauss's re-analysis of the La Chapelle bones³ gains wider circulation.

III

So far we have discussed chiefly those areas of concurrence between the evolutionary and the creationist positions. With the consideration of Simpson's third mode, however, we introduce the area of disagreement between the two. Essentially it boils down to a matter of facts vs. theory, data vs. interpretation, or a matter of attitudes and pre-suppositions.

Despite the factual basis of speciation and phyletic evolution, there are what Simpson refers to as "major discontinuities of the record" existing in the paleontology of the larger taxonomic groups between which there

3. William L. Strauss, Jr., presented before Section H of the 123rd annual meeting of the AAAS in New York, December, 1956.

is no fossil evidence of relationship. The origins of these larger groups are attributed to "a particular set of evolutionary events" that are "changes of adaptive zones such that transitional forms between the old zone and the new cannot, or at any rate do not, persist" (1953: 389). After showing in some detail how this applies to the perissodactyls, or horse group, Simpson concluded in 1944 that this regular absence of transitional forms is not confined to mammals, but is an almost universal phenomenon, as has long been noted by paleontologists. It is true of almost all orders of all classes of animals, both vertebrate and invertebrate. A fortiori, it is also true of the classes, themselves, and of the major animal phyla, and it is apparently also true of analogous categories of plants [1944: 107].

Now Simpson's third mode called "quantum" evolution purports to be the explanation for the jumping of these gaps. In his words, quantum evolution is "applied to the relatively rapid shift of a biotic population in disequilibrium, to an equilibrium distinctly unlike an ancestral condition. ... It is . . . believed to be the dominant and most essential process in the origin of taxonomic units of relatively high rank, such as families, orders, and classes. It is believed to include circumstances that explain the mystery that hovers over the origins of such major groups" (1944: 206).

Simpson candidly admits this as a "controversial and hypothetical" attempt to establish the existence of an "inferred phenomena." He points out that "major incidents of quantum evolution have systematically poor records, for reasons discussed [above]. Nevertheless, we do have many partial records of quantum evolution, even at high levels (e.g., origin of classes), which can be completed by sound and unequivocal inference."⁴

Of course, Simpson doesn't necessarily represent all evolutionists, but his three-fold breakdown is, de facto, applicable to organic evolution in its present-day form. Thus we conclude that it is at this point--quantum evolution--that the creationist and the evolutionist must part company. Again the question, "What is the alternative?" needs explicit definition. In other words, how will "creation" as an alternative to the quantum interpretation still fit the facts? As mentioned above, it becomes a matter of pre-supposition: for the creationist, supernaturalism; for the evolutionist, naturalism. I propose then that since in a percentage of *orders*, major gaps appear between them, perhaps the *order* is as near to being what Genesis 1 means by the term "kind" as any single taxonomic category can

4. 1953: 389. It should be added that Dr. Simpson points out as "the most important point about this mode of evolution and one of the reasons for its separate designation and special study" that "quantum evolution may lead to a new group at any taxonomic level. It is probable that species, either genetic or phyletic, often arise in this way. Certainly genera and all higher categories may do so. The phenomenon naturally becomes clearer and more readily definable when the change in adaptation and structure is relatively large, and such changes commonly eventuate in the development of higher categories. There is no level at which clear-cut quantum evolution is the only mode of origin of new groups, but at high levels some element of quantum evolution is usually involved" (Ibid.).

be. This proposal implies simply that God created the orders, and natural selection took it from there. Of course this cannot be maintained consistently as far as *orders* are concerned, since in some cases classes or even phyla could be applied, and obviously in the case of man, a much lower category, perhaps genus, would apply.⁵ In other words, "an honest creationist will ask the paleontologist what he knows of the time of origin of animals, and draw his conclusions from the data" (Mixer 1953: 18).

Thus, if a supernatural presupposition is allowed, the interpretation may still remain consistent with the facts. One of the basic postulates of evolution, for example, is that *similarity implies genetic relationship*. However, with a supernatural agency pre-supposed, it becomes exactly as reasonable to postulate that *similarity implies a common creator*.

The fact that the evolutionary hypothesis as a total explanation for all major transitions is so firmly established in our scientific and educational system is due to at least three important factors. 1. Based upon the experimental knowledge of genetics, the sequential data of paleontology, and the logical consistency of the processes of adaptation and natural selection as presently conceived, this major jumping of gaps, in Simpson's words. "has a probable mechanism and would be expected under given conditions" (1944: 207). 2. The only alternative, creation, or the allowance of a supernaturalistic presupposition in the tradition of science, has been considered as clearly "incredible."⁶ 3. The creationists, due to their own peculiar tradition of fending off the advances of science, have failed to formulate this alternative in a scientifically respectable manner.

The primary point of difference, then, between evolutionism and creationism is not a matter of accepting or rejecting facts. There are no data as such that conflict with the Genesis account of creation as interpreted in the context of the author's language and culture. The primary point of difference is on the level of mechanistic vs. supernatural presuppositions. Most evolutionists claim with G. S. Carter, that "man is an animal, and

5. Mixer arrives at a similar conclusion suggesting that the order is at present a reasonable approximation of "kind". The obvious fact that "kind" cannot be equated consistently with any one taxonomic category is also explained as follows, "Because marsupials are separated by structural gaps unbridged by intermediate forms from other orders of mammals, a creationist may conclude that the first marsupials were specially created, if there are gaps between families or genera within the order of marsupials, he may believe that such families also had separately created beginnings. Whenever a gap is filled then a revision of the idea of what are the special creations should be made" (Mixer 1953: 17).

6. "Evolution itself is accepted by zoologists . . . because no alternative explanation is credible" (Watson 1929: 231). "The only alternative (to evolution) the doctrine of special creation which may be true but is irrational" (Morf

1925: 22). "... If Darwin's hypothesis be rejected, there is, it must be frankly admitted, no satisfactory alternative to take its place" (Scott 1917: 26). I am indebted to Dr. John R. Howitt, Superintendent, Ontario Hospital, Port Arthur Ontario, for these three quotations.

however greatly his present state differs from that of the rest of the animal kingdom, we must accept that he arose from sub-human ancestors by a process of evolution" (1953: 327). And, despite their acknowledgment that man is a wholly unique, or culture-bearing animal, most would tend to agree with Simpson that "man is the result of a purposeless and materialistic process that did not have him in mind. He was not planned. He is a state of matter, a form of life, a sort of animal, and a species of the Order Primates, akin nearly or remotely to all of life and indeed to all that is material" (1949: 344-45). The creationist claims that man is more than a unique animal, and that he was both planned and created by God.

In summary on these three modes of evolutionary process, the creationist may well hold, with Professor Mixter (1953: 10-11, 23), the following conclusions:

1. Speciation. "Whenever geneticists can show common genes, they are entitled to infer common ancestry."
2. Phyletic evolution. "When animals are traceable to other animals by a closely graded series of transitional forms, [the paleontologist is entitled to infer that] the early forms have given rise to the later ones."
3. Quantum evolution. "When a group of animals is separated from another group by an unbridged gap, then until bridges are found, one may hold that the groups so separated have arisen from independently created kinds."

IV

The questions may well be asked, how does this creationist position differ essentially from the Roman Catholic position, and, does the Catholic position also constitute an alternative to organic evolution?

The crux of the whole matter lies in the question of origins. The creationist, while he fully accepts the facts of genetics and the fossil record, believes that God created life and man, and that man did not arise from a previously existing organism. This position is frequently, but erroneously, called "theistic evolution," because it allows for some process in God's creative activity instead of necessitating an instantaneous creation. But while genetics and paleontology have played a big part in the expression of organic evolution, they neither alone nor in combination constitute evolution. One might as logically call the creationist a "theistic speciationist" or a believer in "theistic Mendelism" or "theistic stratigraphy" because he grants that God has instituted the hereditary process of genetics and the geological dynamics of prehistory or one might call a Bible-believing weather forecaster a "theistic meteorologist" simply because he believes that the laws which God instituted at creation, are believed and relied upon by non-Christian observers as well!

The theistic evolutionist, however, while believing that God is operating the process, also accepts the possibility that man could have arisen for a non-human creature, and that God merely endowed him with a soul, which act constituted the "creation of man," culturally, mentally, and spiritually. This position of theistic evolution is typically, but not exclusively, that of the Roman Catholics, who only specify their opposition to "materialistic" evolution. Dr. J. F. Ewing, in a recent issue of the *Catholic Anthropological Quarterly*, summarizing "The Present Catholic Attitude Towards Evolution" admits that "God may indeed have used a body prepared for the soul as far as possible by evolution. . . ."; that "there is no defined doctrine which opposes a theory of the evolution of Man's body, ... " and that "the possibility that there were true men before Adam and Eve, men whose line became extinct (in other words, Pre-Adamites), is allowable."

This I find, at present, impossible to accept, on theological as well as on anthropological grounds. Theologically, the fundamental doctrines of the original perfection and subsequent fall of man and his consequent need of redemption; and the role of the Saviour, Jesus Christ, the Son of God in dying on the cross to pay the penalty for the fall, for all who will accept Him, are seriously jeopardized by a first man having descended organically from pre-human parents. Now theistic evolutionists likewise acknowledge the necessity of retaining this doctrine of original sin. It is inextricably tied up with the necessity of having all mankind arise from one man. The Catholic statement on this from the Encyclical "Humani Generis" quoted by Ewing, is as follows:

No Catholic can hold that after Adam there existed on this earth true men who did not take their origin through natural generation from him as from the first parent of all, or that Adam is merely a symbol for a number of first parents. For it is unintelligible how such an opinion can be squared with what the sources of revealed truth and the documents of the Magisterium of the Church teach on original sin, which proceeds from sin actually committed by an individual Adam, and which, passed on to all by way of generation, is in everyone as his own [Cotter 1951: 43].

Thus the theistic evolutionist, if he allows man to have arisen from a non-human form, is obliged to inject some creative action or other upon his physical body in addition to giving him a soul, in order to make that body perfect and not subject to death. To me this is simply an additional and unnecessary complication of hypotheses to which Occam's razor could well apply.⁷

Anthropologically, the theistic evolutionary explanation for the origin of man seems to run counter to what we have become accustomed to expect of the cultural assemblages in association with fossil man. The pre-adamic theory would seem to imply that there were beings morphologically

7. *Essentia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem.*

human, but *without culture*. The evidence of human paleontology seems to argue otherwise. Of course we are at once faced with the question, What is morphologically human? I believe that the question of "human or non-human?" cannot be answered categorically upon morphological grounds. The question must be answered on spiritual grounds, which I presume are only indicated by cultural remains.

The problem of the interpretation of the Australopithecines immediately arises. So far no definite indication of any cultural assemblage has been identified.⁸ I readily accept the facts of the unique Australopithecine morphology, the marked humanoid conformation of the dentition, the ilium, and other features indicative of an upright posture.⁹ Nevertheless, until such time as the chronological problem of Australopithecine's antiquity in relation to true hominids is resolved, and some identifiable cultural assemblage is discovered, I prefer to class them as "non-human" in every sense of the word. I consider Mayr's designation of *Homo transvaalensis* premature, and cannot yet see Robinson's inclusion of *Meganthropus* in the same genus as *Paranthropus* without more of the former to go on. But, as I have attempted to point out to my hyper-traditionalist friends, should such a cultural assemblage be identified for the Australopithecines, it will necessitate perhaps a drastic revision of what we are used to considering "human" but nothing more as far as the creationist position is concerned.

By way of summarizing similarities and differences between the Roman Catholic view of evolution and the creationist view: (a) The following points we hold in common (adapted from Ewing 1956: 124)

1. The body of data and the processes of speciation and the paleontological record are accepted without reservation.
2. "We know of Adam and Eve only from revelation, and a belief in an original pair is not in conflict with any real scientific evidence."

8. During the discussion period at the graduate seminar of the Anthropology Department, University of Chicago, February 18, 1957, Dr. F. Clark Howell revealed that according to communications from C. K. Brain in South Africa there had been some 50 Quartzite pebble tools discovered within the past year in the Australopithecus-bearing deposits at Sterkfontein which Mr. Brain was currently investigating.

Dr. Braidwood then offered the thought-provoking suggestion that as far as he was concerned, the Australopithecines could be a perfectly good tool-making species, yet without necessarily possessing a "cultural assemblage" as normally considered with all of its ramifications. Perhaps the Australopithecines will precipitate a re-definition of "culture" as well as of "human".

9. One anti-evolutionary journal (*The High Way*, XXVI [Oct.-Dec., 1956], 20-39) devoted some twenty pages to criticising my inclusion of the Australopithecinae in an article on fossil man. According to the typical hyper-traditionalist views expressed in this as well as other like periodicals, my position is that of a "compromiser" who is "currying the favor of infidel scientists." I am an "intellectual snob" who is blind to the fact that evolutionists are engaged in a monstrous conspiracy to undermine and overthrow the teachings of the Bible!

3. "All men (and hence the first man) are endowed by God with spiritual souls."

4. The first man was constituted a human being "by the direct and immediate action of God, an action that affected both soul and body."

(b) The differences lie in the question of origins which may be summarized, as follows

1. The evolutionary origin of the major taxonomic groups, or of paleontological series between which there is only inferential evidence of connection, sometimes referred to as "quantum" or "macro-" evolution, is *accepted implicitly* by the Catholic theologian, but is rejected by the creationist.

2. The evolutionary origin of man from some pre-human form is *allowed* by the Catholic theologian but is rejected by the creationist.

V

For a long time, evolution has been opposed by a hyper-traditionalist brand of creationism characterized by a negative, anti-evolutionary approach. Consequently evolutionists have erroneously considered creationists as inevitably of this brand, and have tended to overlook the position of a scientifically-minded creationism which has attempted to be non-evolutionary in its thinking rather than purely *anti*-evolutionary.¹⁰ This is not surprising however, since these creationists have tended to be less vocal and perhaps a bit more cautious in the expression of their views.

The Roman Catholic theologian has always represented a basically creationist position, but has, with many Protestant scholars, accepted more of evolutionary theory than the facts seem to demand. Thus, with theistic presuppositions demanded, this position is termed by many "theistic evolution."

Thus we are left with three major groups based upon supernaturalistic premises, the hyper-traditionalist, the scientific creationist, and the theistic evolutionist.

In restating our question, Is there an alternative to organic evolution? it would seem that the answer is "yes" regarding origins; "no" regarding processes; and, that in comparison with organic evolution, creationism is the alternative, theistic evolution merely a variant.

10. This does not mean that they are any the less aware of the dangerous implications of evolution which run counter to a biblical position. It does mean that they desire to concern themselves with more than mere denunciations of these. They attempt rather to formulate a positive, non-evolutionary interpretation of the facts which is consistent, both scientifically and theologically.

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Enoch, a Man Who Walked with God

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The account of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, is placed in the third section of Genesis¹ and is announced by the major structural word of the book תולדות, generally expressed as "these are the generations of. . . ." However, as Woudstra has demonstrated,² the תולדות structure announces the historical development from the ancestor mentioned and should be understood as, "this is what became of (person's name)," or "this is what happened to the line of (person's name)." Genesis 5:1 would then read, "This is the book of what became of the family tree of Adam."

What did become of Adam's family tree? Whatever happened to the human race? Did God's promise of death (2:16-17) come true? Whatever became of the curse (3:19)? Would man, due to his rebellion, die after all? Before 5:1 no one had died (though Abel was murdered by his brother and Lamech killed a man for wounding him and a boy for striking him, 4:23).

The theme of chapter 5 is the end of life. "No reader of Genesis 5 . . . fails to be impressed by the recurrent phrase 'And he died;' which baldly and emphatically concludes the entry for each of these antediluvians. The whole movement of the regular form of these notices is toward death."³ In other words the answer to the

¹ The first section is 1:1-2:3 and the second is 2:4-4:26.

² M. H. Woudstra, "The Toledot of the Book of Genesis and Their Redemptive-Historical Significance," *Concordia Theological Journal* 5 (1970): 185.

³ David J. A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch* (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1978), p. 66.

questions, Whatever happened to Adam's family tree? or Whatever happened to the human race? is that they all died. Did God's promise of death ("in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die," 2:17) ever come true? Yes, Adam's line died successively. Whatever became of the curse? "The answer is that, in spite of human achievements (the achievements of chapter 4), the curse of death reigned as king from Adam's time on through the generations."⁴

The account of Enoch, then, the one who walked with God, is placed in the midst of the reign of death. This theme of death harmonizes well with the author's overall theme in Genesis 1-11, the spread of sin and the spread of grace.⁵ "Thus Genesis chapter 5 describes something like a transitional period, during which death caused by sin only slowly broke the powerful physical resistance of primitive human nature."⁶ In other words in spite of human progress, civilization, and prosperity, in spite of mankind's aspirations, he died.⁷ So the setting of Enoch's walk with God is the spread of sin, ending with death.

The two chief components of narrative are characters (people) and events.⁸ Events make up the plot, and the characters are the actors who carry out the plot. The plot of Genesis 5, a plot whose structure is carried along with the monotonous phrase "and he died" (repeated eight times) and whose actors are Adam's family tree (10 men), is a masterful backdrop against which is recorded this remarkable sentence, "Enoch walked with God." In a plot where a funeral bell continually tolls out its mournful drone there is a disjunctive ray of hope, another example of the spread-of-sin, spread-of-grace theme. The plot unfolds in the following way.

The prologue (5:1-2) of this "Genealogy of Death" recalls the creation of Adam. Moses wrote that man, created male and female, made in God's likeness, was blessed by God and named "Man" (this naming here mentioned for the first time in Genesis). Adam also became the father of a son in his own likeness (mentioned for the first time in Genesis), a son made according to Adam's image, a son whom Adam named Seth (v. 3).

⁴ Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), p. 171.

⁵ Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch*, pp. 64-73.

⁶ Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, rev. ed., trans. John H. Marks (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), pp. 69-70.

⁷ Allen P. Ross, "The Exegetical Exposition of the Pentateuch: Genesis" (class notes in 117 Exegesis in the Pentateuch, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fall 1983), p. 18.

⁸ Shimon Bar-Efrat, "Some Observations on the Analysis of Structure in Biblical Narrative," *Vetus Testamentum* 30 (1980): 155-73.

The effect of the prologue, as Sailhamer points out, is to cast God in the role of a father.⁹ He made a son in His own likeness. He named His son. He blessed His son. He is like the Genesis patriarchs who also did the same for their children. This same pattern is duplicated by Adam. One important point emerges in the genealogical list in chapter 5: God is shown to be the Father of all mankind.

The plot continues with a lengthy genealogical list (vv. 3-32) and concludes in 9:28-29 (with the account of the Flood spliced into the record of man from Adam to Noah). The list in Genesis 5 follows this pattern:

Component 1: Person A lived X years and then became the father of B.

Component 2: Person A lived Y years after he fathered B, fathering other sons and daughters.

Component 3: Person A's entire life lasted X and Y years; then he died.

The same pattern is followed again in 11:10-26, beginning with Shem (Noah's son). However, in the record of Enoch, the third component is missing. No mention is made of death. But with the other patriarchs in chapter 5 death is emphasized. Why, for instance, add "and he died" when that fact is understood? If a person's entire life consists of X number of years, it is assumed (logically) that he died. Yet the writer underscores each man's death by repeating the words "and he died." The purpose is to highlight by contrast the account of Enoch. Enoch, seventh in the line from Adam, breaks the structural pattern--he did not live (Component 1), he walked with God; he did not die (Component 3), he walked with God and God took him. The reversal is stark and bursting with theological truth. Obviously the author crafted the genealogy in this way to make it a theological commentary.¹⁰ Theological truth about life and death (under the curse) is being taught by means of this recurring literary pattern and the subsequent break from it. The pattern expresses the author's value system.¹¹

The prologue (vv. 1-2) followed by the monotonous genealogical list of death (vv. 3-32) juxtaposes two opposing themes. The sons and daughters of God the Creator, children made in His own likeness, children designed to be blessed, as a father blesses the children he loves and cares for, fall prey instead to a curse. Those who were once

⁹ John Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 2 vols., The Expositor's Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 2:70.

¹⁰ Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 120.

¹¹ Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 95.

blessed are now cursed. Those made in His likeness, those made to live are now destined to die, returning to dust, thereby also falling prey to the serpent who will eat dust (3:14). All the children of God the Father die.

The spread-of-sin motif is evident. But where is the accompanying spread-of-grace motif? Where is the sense of hope in the midst of all this death?

The Account of Enoch, Seventh from Adam

The account of Enoch (5:21-24) marks an exception to the pattern in Genesis 5. In contrast to the smooth, repetitious sequence of the rest of the genealogy, there is an abrupt disjuncture at 5:22. Instead of "And Enoch lived" (which would be the regular pattern up to this point), Moses wrote, "Enoch walked with God three hundred years." Also in verse 24 the author dropped the regular phrase "and he died," replacing it with, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

The effect of this abrupt change at verses 22 and 24 is to place Enoch's life outside the regular sequence of the chapter. "A study of the author's style in Genesis shows that when he wants to begin a specific topic much narrower than the preceding subject matter, he uses such a technique of disjuncture."¹² The change in structure reveals an exception to the accounts of the others. In contrast to the formulae of the others, who lived and died, Enoch walked with God. He did not simply "live"; he walked with God. This suggests that walking with God was a step above mere living.¹³ Furthermore Enoch did not die; he walked with God (stated for the second time), and God took him.

The *hithpael* stem of the verb **הלך** (waw plus Hithpael preterite) recalls the Lord God walking in the garden (Hithpael participle, 3:8)¹⁴ and in some way corresponds to it.¹⁵ Whenever the author of Genesis (and of the Pentateuch) used the Hithpael stem of **הלך**, one of the subjects of the narratives is God. (The only exception is Exodus 21:19.) Like Enoch, Noah also walked with God (Gen. 6:9). When Abram arrived in the land, the author picked up the thought

¹² John Sailhamer, "Exegetical Notes: Genesis 1:1-2:4a," *Trinity Journal* n.s. 5 (1984): 76.

¹³ Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, p. 175.

¹⁴ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books Publishers, 1987), p. 127.

¹⁵ A. Dillmann, *Genesis*, trans. William B. Stevenson, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897), 1:224-25.

of walking once again: "Arise, walk about the land" (13:17); "Walk before Me" (17:1; cf. 24:40; 48:15). Walking with God involves the idea of continuity or habitual manner of life, and all these examples employ the Hithpael stem (cf. Deut. 23:14).

The mention of the longevity of Enoch's walk-300 years-adds to the force of the verb. So the expression "walked with God" was the author's summary of Enoch's life. Bullinger notes that "walk" is "used of one's continued course of action and life: i.e., the habitual habit and manner of life."¹⁶ Today one might say that walking with God was Enoch's lifestyle.

Why did Moses state twice that Enoch walked with God? Why underline the death of the preceding and succeeding patriarchs? Sailhamer cogently answers these questions:

Why does the author want to point to Enoch so specifically as an exception? It is not merely because he did not die. That in itself is reason enough to merit special attention, but it does not sufficiently explain the purpose of the author in this case. The author's purpose can be better seen in the way he has emphasized, through repetition, that Enoch "walked with God" (vv. 22, 24). The phrase "walked with God". . . clearly means something to the author, for he uses the same expression to describe Noah as "a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time" (6:9), and Abraham and Isaac as faithful servants of God (17:1; 24:40; 48:15). Its use here shows that the author views it as the reason why Enoch did not die. Enoch is pictured as one who did not suffer the fate of Adam ("you will die") because, unlike the others, he "walked with God."¹⁷

Here then is a glimpse of grace in the midst of the spread of sin (death being a result of sin). Here the funeral bell stops tolling. One man walked with God and God took him.¹⁸ He escaped the clutches of death. Clearly the pathway to life, the road one is to travel to escape the sting of death, is the one of the pilgrim, in which a person walks with God.

At this point Moses did not explain what it means to walk with God. He cited no method or formula. Though he held Enoch up as a model for others to follow, he communicated no descriptive explanation of this "walk." Moses held that explanation until later in the narrative. He uncovered an inherent relationship between the past and the future, using the lives of God's people. "That which hap-

¹⁶ E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1898; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968), p. 832. See also E. A. Speiser, "The Durative Hithpael: A Tan-Form," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75 (1955): 118-21.

¹⁷ Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 74.

¹⁸ The same terminology, "God took him," is used of Elijah's transport to glory in which he escaped death (2 Kings 2:1, 5, 9-10).

pened to God's people in the past portends events that still lie in the future. Or, to say it another way, the past is seen as a lesson of the future."¹⁹ Enoch's walk, then, though yet unexplained theologically, is a lesson the author will present at a later time, a lesson (from the past) designed to be learned by future generations of God's people, for they too will live under the curse.

Walking with God, then, incorporates several theological ideas. First, the one who walks with God is a creature made in God's likeness and linked to the Creator in a Father-son relationship. Second, walking with God occurred during the reign of death, thereby making the walk an exception to the normal pattern of living and dying. Thus simply living and dying is portrayed as below the norm in quality. And conversely, walking with God is a step above mere living. It is the way to overcome the curse. Third, the walk is descriptive of a lifestyle, a pattern of life with continuity and duration. Fourth, this walk or way of life is designed to be a lesson for God's people in the future.

In writing of Enoch's life Moses' aim was to communicate hope. Death is not the final answer; for Enoch God overruled death. The black cloud of death, hovering over the human race, a cloud promised by God Himself, a dark cloud expressing the essence of the curse, is split wide open with the brilliant rays of Enoch's life. There is rescue from death. There is rescue from the effects of the curse. There is hope. There is a road back into the garden; there is a method of bypassing the guardian cherubim and flaming sword—there is access to the tree of life. One can indeed live forever. It is possible after all once again to fellowship with and worship the Lord God in the garden. How? By walking with God; thus the lesson of Enoch (placed in the genealogy of death) is this: Life comes through walking with God.

A Pastoral Response

Israelites approaching Canaan needed the lesson of Enoch's life. Etched in their own history was the tragic account of an entire generation lost (to death) in the wilderness (cf. the Book of Numbers; 1 Cor. 10:1-13), a generation that overlooked or ignored the lesson that life with God (eternal life) comes by walking with God.

Enoch's life is also a model for the people of God's New Covenant to follow in their earthly pilgrimage.²⁰ The finality of

¹⁹ John H. Sailhamer, "The Canonical Approach to the OT: Its Effect on Understanding Prophecy," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 30 (September 1987): 311.

²⁰ Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, p. 174.

death caused by sin, and so powerfully demonstrated in the genealogy of Genesis, is in fact not so final. Man was not born to die; he was born to live and that life comes by walking with God. The tentacles of the curse, reaching over the entire scope of Genesis 1-11 (except for 1:1-2:3) and causing unrelieved gloom²¹ are thwarted at the seventh from Adam. Walking with God is the key to the chains of the curse. Furthermore walking with God is a step above mere living; it is also the answer to man's deepest need and greatest fear (death).

The New Testament gives a theological commentary on Enoch's life.

WALKING WITH GOD INVOLVES FAITH IN HIM

The writer of Hebrews bolstered the hearts of his readers by communicating the concept that faith is the key to perseverance in the furnace of suffering (Heb. 10:32-39). After giving a brief definition of faith (11:1), he cited an impressive list of people who gained God's approval (v. 2) and won spiritual victories by means of faith. Faith enables believers to understand creation (v. 3, referring to Gen. 1-2). Abel gained a righteous standing with God by means of faith (Heb. 11:4, referring to Gen. 4). And next is Enoch, who by faith "was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God" (Heb. 11:5). The next verse (tucked between references to Enoch and Noah, both of whom are said in Genesis to have walked with God) is critically placed and theologically significant: "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (v. 6).

Hebrews 11:5-6 is a divinely inspired commentary on Genesis 5:22-24. The analysis of Enoch's walk with God focuses on his faith in God. Faith then was the theological description of his walk and the instrumental cause of his pleasing God. Two features of Enoch's faith are stressed: his faith in the reality of God ("for he who comes to God must believe that He is," v. 6), and his faith in the responsiveness of God ("and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him," v. 6). Walking with God requires faith in Him, faith in the reality of His existence, and faith in the reality of His responsiveness (to one's faith). Walking with God inspires believers to look to God's future rewards based on their present faith and life.

The writer of Hebrews did not say that Enoch thought about God or speculated about Him. He did not read about God or talk about God and thereby gain His favor. Rather, Enoch believed God and thereby pleased God.

21 Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch*, p. 66.

It seems then that the intent of the author of Genesis (using Enoch's life) was to anticipate the account of Abraham, the man of faith, the paragon of righteousness, the one who displayed faithful obedience to the will of God. He is the author's profound illustration of the meaning of faith. So Enoch was used to prepare the reader by encouraging him to ask, What does it mean to walk with God?

WALKING WITH GOD PLEASES HIM

In Genesis 5 the Septuagint translates the words "Enoch walked with God" as "Enoch pleased God." The same is true of Noah. The Hebrew reads, "Noah walked with God," but the Septuagint has, "Noah pleased God" (6:9). The account of Abraham has the same interpretation in the Septuagint (17:1; 24:40; 48:15). Bruce suggests these changes were made "from a desire, no doubt, to make the language less anthropomorphic."²² The writer of Hebrews (with the Septuagint as his foundation) went along with this interpretation of "walking with God" as "pleasing God" (linked inextricably to the concept of faith as the instrumental cause of pleasing Him). This suggests an important lesson from Enoch's life: walking with God involves living by faith and brings God's favor. He is pleased with believers when they believe Him, when they live by faith. "To please the Lord and to walk with Him are inseparable factors."²³

WALKING WITH GOD IS NOT LEGALISTIC ADHERENCE TO THE LAW

A profound lesson in regard to legalism and faith can be mined from the account of Enoch. Sailhamer speaks to this point.

It is important to see that for the author of the Pentateuch "walking with God" could not have meant a mere "keeping" of a set of laws. Rather it is just with those men who could not have had a set of "laws" that the author associates the theme of "walking with God." By choosing such men to exemplify "walking with God," the author shows his desire to teach a better way to live than merely a legalistic adherence to the law. . . . For him the way to life was exemplified best in men like Enoch ("Enoch walked with God," 5:22), Noah ("he walked with God," 6:9), and Abraham ("Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness," 15:6). It is to these Patriarchs who lived long before the giving of the law at Sinai that the author of Genesis turns for a model of faith and trust in God.²⁴

In pastoral ministry the message of living each day by faith--regardless of the circumstances--must continually be communicated to God's people. Faith is the *modus operandi* of both salvation and

²² F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), p. 287.

²³ F. S. Parnham, "Walking with God," *Evangelical Quarterly* 46 (1974): 118.

²⁴ Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 74.

sanctification and therefore it must become the flour (the essential ingredient) in all the meals prepared for and served to God's flock. If faith is the steam in the boiler which moves the locomotive down the track, then Christian leaders must continually and faithfully stoke the fires of faith in the hearts of their people.

Worship services should be designed to contribute to that faith-building process. Hymns and Bible expositions must certainly feed the faith of the sheep. Meetings for intercessory prayer should also help build faith in the One to whom believers pray. Rather than allow people to leave prayer meetings with despairing hearts--seeing the size of the difficulties and the nature of the problems--it behooves leaders to focus their people's hearts on the name of the Lord ("May the name of the God of Jacob set you securely on high. . . and in the name of our God we will set up our banners. . . we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God," Ps. 20:1, 5, 7). To focus on the name of the Lord (the sum total of His attributes) helps build people's confidence and trust in Him (cf. Matt. 21:18-22).

Pastors and other Christian leaders are to build people's faith in the Triune God of Scripture. To build people's faith is to help them walk with God. To help them walk with God brings God's favor. He is pleased with them. And by nurturing their walk of faith, their pilgrimage of trust, they will walk right into eternity to continue that unabated walk with God-forever. Spurgeon's comments on Enoch are appropriate here:

What a splendid walk! A walk of three hundred years! One might desire a change of company if he walked with anybody else, but to walk with God for three centuries was so sweet that the patriarch kept on with his walk until he walked beyond time and space, and walked into paradise, where he is still marching on in the same divine society. He had heaven on earth, and it was therefore not so [unusual] that he glided away from earth to heaven so easily.²⁵

WALKING WITH GOD OVERCOMES DEATH AND BRINGS LIFE

The reason God overruled death for Enoch was that he walked with God. Walking with God is the way to life, the way to victory over the curse for today and tomorrow. Enoch's life depicts the fact that the reign of death will come to an end and the faithful will reign in life through Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:12-21).

Conclusion

Walking with God involves having faith in Him, and that faith pleases God. And, walking with God is the way to eternal

25 Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of the Old Testament* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1934), 1:35.

life, the way back into the presence of God, to worship Him and enjoy fellowship with Him forever.

Dods's commentary on Enoch's walk with God provides a fitting conclusion to this discussion.

"Enoch walked with God and he was not; for God took him." The phrase is full of meaning. Enoch walked with God because he was His friend and liked His company, because he was going in the same direction as God, and had no desire for anything but what lay in God's path. We walk with God when He is in all our thoughts; not because we consciously think of Him at all times, but because He is naturally suggested to us by all we think of; as when any person or plan or idea has become important to us, no matter what we think of, our thought is always found recurring to this favourite object, so with the godly man everything has a connection with God and must be ruled by that connection. When some change in his circumstances is thought of, he has first of all to determine how the proposed change will affect his connection with God—will his conscience be equally clear, will he be able to live on the same friendly terms with God, and so forth. When he falls into sin he cannot rest till he has resumed his place at God's side and walks with Him again. This is the general nature of walking with God; it is a persistent endeavour to hold all our life open to God's inspection and in conformity to His will; a readiness to give up what we find does cause any misunderstanding between us and God; a feeling of loneliness if we have not some satisfaction in our efforts at holding fellowship with God, a cold and desolate feeling when we are conscious of doing something that displeases Him. This walking with God necessarily tells on the whole life and character. As you instinctively avoid subjects which you know will jar upon the feelings of your friend, as you naturally endeavour to suit yourself to your company, so when the consciousness of God's presence begins to have some weight with you, you are found instinctively endeavouring to please Him, repressing the thoughts you know He disapproves, and endeavouring to educate such dispositions as reflect His own nature.²⁶

To walk with God is to open to Him all one's purposes and hopes, to seek His judgment on one's scheme of life and idea of happiness, to be on thoroughly friendly terms with God.

26 Marcus Dods, *The Book of Genesis, The Expositor's Bible* (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1893), pp. 51-52.

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SHORT STUDY

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND THE INTERPRETATION OF GEN 2:4-7

JACK COLLINS

I. Introduction

The interpretation of Gen 2:4-7 is a traditional hard place for Biblical studies. These verses are often cited as proof of discord between the creation narratives of Genesis 1 and 2, and hence as evidence of disparate sources of the originals. In response, many have sought to harmonize the two pericopes, but with widely differing conclusions. The purpose of this essay is to employ the tools of discourse grammar to see if they can shed light on this passage.

We begin by giving the Hebrew of Gen 2:4-8, with the RSV for a sample English version. Our grammatical discussion will lead to an interpretation that we can express by modifying the RSV

4 אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם ביום עשות יהוה אלהים ארץ ושמים
 5 וכל שיח השדה טרם יהיה בארץ וכל-עשב השדה טרם יצמח
 כי לא המטיר יהוה אלהים על-הארץ ואדם אין לעבד את-האדמה
 6 ואד יעלה מן-הארץ והשקה את-כל-פני-האדמה
 7 וייצר יהוה אלהים את-האדם עפר מן-האדמה ויפח באפיו נשמת חיים
 ויהי האדם לנפש חיה
 8 ויטע יהוה אלהים גן-בעדן מקדם וישם שם את-האדם אשר יצר

(4) These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, (5) when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up--for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; (6) but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground--(7) then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (8) And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. (RSV)

The way the RSV has divided verse 4 into two parts, with 4b as the beginning of the sentence that continues on through verse 5, represents a

common analysis of the clause-to-clause relationships.¹ Further, the interpretation of the Hebrew *'eres* as "earth" in verses 5-6 is also common. Indeed, it is this that leads to the declaration of contradiction between these verses and the events of Genesis 1. S. R. Driver is typical:²

The words [of verses 4b-5], taken in connexion with the sequel (v. 7), are intended to describe the condition of the earth at the time when man was created: no shrub or herb--and *a fortiori*, no tree--had yet appeared upon it, for it was not sufficiently watered to support vegetation. According to i. 11f., plant- and tree-life was complete three 'days' before the creation of man: obviously the present writer views the order of events differently.

Those who oppose source criticism but still accept this clause-to-clause analysis typically contend that the two pericopes are better seen as complementary rather than contradictory; and any successful harmonization between the two pericopes diminishes the credibility of conventional source analysis.³

A recent example of such a complementary interpretation comes from Mark Futato.⁴ He says,

I understand Gen 2:5 as having a global reference that would parallel the situation prior to Days 3b [Gen 1:11-12] and 6b [Gen 1:26-30], i.e., before God created vegetation and people.... Rather than being a second creation account, Gen 2:4-25 is properly read as a resumption and expansion not of Day 6 but of Days 3b and 6b taken together as a unit.⁵

He uses this to support the conclusion that strict chronological sequence is not a part of the communicative intent of either Genesis 1 or 2, and hence to support the so-called "framework" interpretation of the Genesis days.

¹ The RSV as it stands is non-committal on whether verse 4a goes with 1:1-2:3 as its conclusion, or with 2:4b-25 as its heading. My discussion will address that question later.

² S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (Westminster Commentary; London: Methuen, (1904), 36-37. Cf. Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997 [German original, 1910]), 4-5; John Skinner, *Genesis* (International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1951); Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984 [German original, 1974]), 197. Terje Stordalen, "Genesis 2, 4: Restudying a locus classicus," *ZAW* 104:2 (1992) 163-177, gives an overview of the process whereby this became dominant (at 163). The influence of this approach is visible in many places, which it would be tedious to document; one example would be Dianne Bergant and Carroll Stuhlmueller, "Creation according to the Old Testament," in Ernan McMullin, ed., *Evolution and Creation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985), 153-175, at 155, who simply take it for granted.

³ Richard Hess, "Genesis 1-2 in its literary context," *TynB* 41:1 (1990), 143-53, gives a rationale for this approach without discussing the particulars of Genesis 2:4-7. As he observes, it is a feature of Genesis first to give the overall picture, and then to go back and focus on some details. Derek Kidner, "Genesis 2:5, 6: Wet or Dry?" *TynB* 17 (1966) 109-14, attempts to harmonize the two passages by taking 2:5-6 as describing the same conditions as 1:2, "the unrelieved expanse of waters" (112).

⁴ Mark Futato, "Because it had rained: A study of Gen 2:5-7 with implications for Gen 2:4-25 and Gen 1:1-2:3," *WTJ* 60 (1998), 1-21. Although the analysis and conclusions of the present paper originated independently of Futato's work, they have profited greatly from that work.

⁵ Futato, "Because it had rained," 12 n.41 and 14.

In my judgment Futato is probably right in supposing that, under this analysis of Gen 2:4-8, the only way to avoid the declaration of incoherence between the two pericopes is to do away with sequentiality. But this can lead us to question whether the analysis is itself right. I am the more interested in raising this question, because my own exegesis has convinced me of a view of the Genesis days as "analogical days," namely they are God's work days: they are analogous, and not identical, to ours, structured for the purpose of setting a pattern for the human rhythm of work and rest. According to this interpretation, the days are "broadly consecutive" (allowing for the possibility that parts of the days may overlap, or that there may be logical rather than chronological criteria for grouping some events in a particular day).⁶

II. Discourse Considerations and Literary Structure for Gen 2:4-25

Discourse analysis is the discipline that studies texts as acts of communication. Discourse grammar analyzes grammatical structures, such as verb tense and aspect, to find patterns of usage related to communicative intent. Described this way, its advantages for exegesis should be obvious and not particularly controversial. Unfortunately, discourse grammarians often use exotic vocabulary and make extravagant claims, and generally do not make clear to the uninitiated just which parts of their position are common ground among Hebrew grammarians, and which are not.⁷ I aim to make use of those parts which are in fact common ground.

Our first task is to identify the genre of our text: is it narrative, exposition, exhortation, eulogistic poetry, lament, or something else? There is no difficulty in discerning that in this passage we are dealing with narrative prose. Next we must delineate the boundaries and structures of the individual pericopes. In this case, we must decide whether we should in fact divide verse 4; and then whether any of its parts belong to the first pericope (1:1-2:3) or to the second (2:5-25).

Many have noticed that in Gen 2:4 we have an elaborate chiasmus.⁸ In general, the communicative function of a chiasmus is to unify its parts, with

⁶ C. John Collins, "Reading Genesis 1:1-2:3 as an act of communication: Discourse analysis and literal interpretation," in Joseph Pipa, Jr. and David Hall, eds., *Did God Create in Six Days?* (Taylors: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999), 131-51. At 142-43 I offer some critique of the framework scheme.

⁷ In this light it is understandable that Bruce Waltke and Michael O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 55, "have resisted the strong claims of the discourse grammarians"; but it is nonetheless an unfortunate decision on their part. After all, the goal of discourse grammar is not to replace the traditional grammar (which seems to be Waltke and O'Connor's perception), but to incorporate that grammar into a systematic description of what good readers in the receptor audience do when they receive a text.

⁸ E.g., Yehudah Kiel, *Sefer Biresit* (Genesis, Da'at Miqra; Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1997), 43 (Hebrew page numbers); C. John Collins, "The *wayyiqtol* as 'pluperfect': When and

the context allowing us to infer just what kind of unity the author has in view.⁹ The chiasmus here can be seen thus: **a** heavens ... **b** earth ... **c** when they were created **c'** in the day that the Lord God made **b'** earth and **a'** heavens. As I observed in an earlier paper,

Such an elaborate chiasmus is evidence of art, not coincidence. Further, by this means the author has tied the two accounts together: note how the word order "the heavens and the earth" (**a** and **b**), as well as the verb *bara* "create" (**c**), point us back to 1:1 (as well as 1:21, 27 for the verb); whereas the change in divine name from 'elohim, "God" (ch. 1) to *yhwh elohim*, "the Lord God" (ch. 2-3) is reflected in the **c'** element. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the final editor wanted his readers to read the two accounts as complementary, not contradictory.¹⁰

This further shows why the change in divine name from 4a to 4b does not of itself indicate that the two parts are separable:¹¹ instead, as Franz Delitzsch put it, "The combination of the two names denotes ... the oneness of God the Creator ['elohim, 1:1-2:4a] and the God of Israel, or the God of positive revelation [yhwh, 2:4b-3:24]."¹²

Therefore the features of the text invite us to read verse 4 as a unit, and to start a new sentence at the beginning of verse 5. However, is it a postscript to the first pericope,¹³ or a heading to the second? The simplest answer is that it introduces what follows: that is the function of the *toledot* "generations" phrases throughout Genesis (cf. 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2),¹⁴ but so long as the communicative function is observed (i.e., as an invitation to read the two narratives as complements) it does not matter much.¹⁵

why," *TynB* 46:1 (1995) 117-140, at 138-40; Stordalen, "Genesis 2, 4," 169-75; Alviero Niccacci, *The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew Prose* (JSOTSS 86, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990 [Italian original, 1986]), 200 n.26; Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word Commentary; Waco: Word, 1987), 46, 53; Umberto Cassuto, *Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961 [Hebrew original, 1944]), I: 98-99.

⁹ For example, the chiastic word order of Genesis 1:5 expresses simultaneous naming of the light and darkness. A good discussion of the chiasmus appears in H. Van Dyke Parunak, "Oral typesetting: Some uses of Biblical structure," *Bib* 62:2 (1981) 153-68.

¹⁰ Collins, "Wayyiqtol as pluperfect," 139.

Stephen Kempf, "Introducing the Garden of Eden: The structure and function of Genesis 2:4b-7," *JOTT* 7:4 (1996) 33-53, acknowledges the chiasmus but supports the division of the verse on the basis of, among other things, the change in divine name (at 39-41).

¹² Franz Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1888), 114. Cf. also Cassuto, *Genesis*, I: 86-88.

¹³ As preferred recently by Alviero Niccacci, "Analysis of Biblical narrative," in R. D. Bergen, ed., *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics* (Dallas: SIL, 1994), 175-98, at 184 (but without discussion).

¹⁴ Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 49; Delitzsch, *Genesis*, 110. This agrees with the paragraph marker of the Masoretic text.

¹⁵ As Cassuto noted, *Genesis*, I: 99. Hence the suggestion that the difference in conclusion between Niccacci and myself on this point is evidence of "the subjective nature of Discourse Analysis" is a drastic overstatement (Joseph Pipa, Jr., "From chaos to cosmos: A critique of the non-literal interpretations of Genesis 1: 1-2:3," in *Did God Create in Six Days?*, 153-98, at 179;

Next we must assess the structure of the whole pericope. Here is where the discourse grammar of the verb can help us. In a Biblical Hebrew narrative, the function of the *wayyiqtol* verb form (also improperly called "the waw-consecutive with imperfect") is as "the backbone or storyline tense of Biblical Hebrew narrative discourse."¹⁶ Hence, if we want to find the main sequence of events in a narrator's presentation, we should begin by looking for the *wayyiqtol* verbs.¹⁷ Other verb forms are used for supplying background information: e.g., the "perfect" (*qatal*) is used to denote events off the storyline, while the "imperfect" (*yiqtol*), "converted perfect" (*weqatal*), and participle (*qotel*) denote background activities with process aspect ("something was happening").¹⁸

From this we can see that the storyline begins in verse 7 with the first *wayyiqtol* verb (*wayyiser*, "and he formed"). Verses 5-6 are syntactically background, or setting, for verse 7: with verbs describing what had "not yet" happened in verse 5, and then verbs with process aspect in verse 6 (*ya'aleh*, RSV "went up," better "was going up"; *wehisqa*, RSV "watered," better "was watering") describing what was happening when the action of verse 7 took place.¹⁹ This yields a structure as follows:

2:4 Hinge/heading

2:5-6 Background/setting--specific circumstances for following events

2:7-9 Events: formation of man, planting of garden, placing of man

2:10-14 Excursus: the four primeval rivers²⁰

cf. Benjamin Shaw, "The literal day interpretation," in the same volume, 199-220, at 200 n.3). The difference is simply one of literary judgment, and does not impinge on the validity of the methodology (especially since Niccacci does not interact with the alternative).

¹⁶ R. E. Longacre, "Discourse perspective on the Hebrew verb: Affirmation and restatement," in Walter Bodine, ed., *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 177-89, at 178. Cf. also Randall Buth, "The Hebrew verb in current discussions," *JOTT* 5:2 (1992) 91-105.

¹⁷ Of course, since this verb form can be used for imbedded storylines, we cannot mechanically identify the occurrence of the verb form with this function.

¹⁸ "Process aspect" has a number of contextually inferred nuances, such as habitual action, repeated action, one action in process, inceptive action.

¹⁹ This analysis agrees with Niccacci, "Analysis of Biblical narrative," 187; cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 46 n.5a. Futato, "Because it had rained," 2 n.5 and 5-6, argues that verse 7 is part of the background with verses 5-6. However, this is unsatisfactory because (1) the *wayyiqtol* sequence begins in verse 7 and runs through verse 9; and (2) it gives no indication of how the discontinuity between verses 7 and 8 is detectable. He depends, not so much on the grammatical particulars as on his assessment of this section as having a "problem-resolution" structure, as well as on his interest in supporting a version of the "framework" view of 1:1-2:3. But if neither of those has independent support, his case loses its force.

²⁰ The verb forms are participles, an imperfect (verse 10 *yippared*, RSV "it divided"), and a converted perfect (verse 10 *wehaya*, RSV "and became"), which have the function of giving process aspect background with past time reference. That is, these four rivers were flowing etc., though they might not flow the same way now (cf. John Munday, Jr., "Eden's geography erodes flood geology," *WTJ* 58:1 [1996] 123-54). The existence of the excursus explains why verse 15 begins by re-stating the action of verse 8 (verse 8 "there he put the man" . . . verse 15 "the Lord God took the man and set him"): it resumes the narrative after a digression. This

2:15-17 Events: God establishes terms of relationship with man

2:18-25 Events: formation of complementary helper

Peak: verses 23-24²¹

III. *Harmonizing with Gen 1:1-2:3*

Since Gen 2:7 recounts the formation of the first human (cf. verse 6 which says there was not a human up to this point), we cooperate with the author by taking it as complementary to 1:27. In doing so we note that the formation of the woman, which is given in the same verse in the broad stroke account of chapter 1, is in chapter 2 separated from the making of the man by several events. The making of the woman is preceded by a declaration of "not good" in 2:18, indicating that at that point we have not yet come to the "very good" status of everything in 1:31. We note further that Gen 2:19 describes the formation of the animals.²² All of this suggests that the storyline events of 2:5-25 are events of the "sixth day" of 1:24-31.²³

This being the case, it makes sense to see if we can interpret 2:5-6 in a simple way as background to the events that begin in verse 7. Can we cooperate with the invitation of verse 4, to read the two pericopes as complementary, in a way that is consonant with the grammar and the lexicon? We can if we take note of several factors. First, we note that discourse-oriented exegesis shows that the "days" of Genesis 1 need not be the 24-hour kind, and that hence the events of the sixth "day" could be some number of weeks, years, or even longer after the beginning of the creation week in 1:3.²⁴

We note further that the semantic range of Hebrew *'eres* in verse 5: is it "earth," "land," or "region"? It is fairly common to take *'eres* as "earth" (cf. RSV, NASB, NIV text), and to find in this a description of the condition of the whole earth.²⁵ But the word quite often means simply "land" (cf.

explanation of verse 15 hardly supports Futato's contention that the narrative of Genesis 2 is not governed by chronological concerns ("Because it had rained," 11-13; Futato takes verse 9-14 as an expansion of verse 8a).

²¹ The "peak" is the place of maximum interest in the narrative, and here it is marked by (1) the poetic and rhetorical features of verse 23; (2) the fact that the project of verse 18 is now complete; (3) the enduring consequences described in verse 24; and (4) the viewpoints of the chief characters, man (verse 23) and God (verse 24) being clearly stated.

²² See Collins, "The *wayyiqtol* as pluperfect," 135-40, justifying the interpretation of 2:19, "The Lord God had formed from the ground every animal of the field and every flying thing of the sky," i.e., this formation actually took place before the making of the man, as recorded in Genesis 1.

²³ Kiel, *Sefer Beresit*, 44 (Hebrew page numbers), points out that Jewish tradition sees the second pericope as an elaboration of the sixth day (see his note 7 for evidence).

²⁴ See Collins, "Reading Genesis 1:1-2:3 as an act of communication."

²⁵ If we reject the view that there are two competing creation accounts, we have to decide what to do about it not having rained: are we to suppose that rain did not fall until the flood?

NIV margin), either as dry land (its sense in 1:10-31) or as a specific region (its sense in 2:11-13), where God made man prior to moving him into the Garden of Eden.²⁶

The discourse relation of verses 5-6 to verse 7, as the setting for the events of verse 7, makes the latter line of interpretation the simplest: that is, in a particular year, at the time of year before the rain fell to water the ground (e.g. in Palestine it does not rain during the summer),²⁷ and at the time when the "mist" (or perhaps "spring"?)²⁸ was rising (possibly beginning to rise),²⁹ in some unspecified region, God formed the first human, planted a garden, and then transplanted the man to this new place to enjoy it and care for it. This interpretation has the advantages of (1) following directly from the discourse relations; (2) using ordinary meanings of words; and (3) being easily harmonious with Gen 1:1-2:3.³⁰

IV. A Revised Translation of Gen 2:4-8 (with notes)

We may modify the RSV given above to reflect this analysis (I have included several philological comments as annotations):

- (4) These are the generations
of the heavens and the earth when they were created,

²⁶ Cf. Kiel, *Sefer Biresit*, 46 (Hebrew page numbers), for a good discussion of the options and an argument for "region."

²⁷ Cf. John Bimson et al., *New Bible Atlas* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 14-15. Futato, "Because it had rained," 3, notes this fact but does not apply it in the same way as I do.

²⁸ Hebrew 'ed, no one knows for sure what this word means. I see no reason to dissent from Delitzsch, *Genesis*, 117, who argues on the basis of Job 36:27 (its only other occurrence in the Bible) and an Arabic cognate for the sense "mist" (i.e., "condensed vapor"). The Septuagint rendered the Hebrew with πηγῇ, "spring," and comparative evidence may favor something like "flood" (cf. Wenham, *Genesis* 1-15, 58; Victor Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17* [New International Commentary on the OT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990], 154-56). I do not, however, consider this evidence decisive. Futato, "Because it had rained," 5-9, argues strongly and, I think, successfully, against the "flood"/"stream" interpretation and in favor of something like "rain-cloud," i.e., along the lines of Delitzsch. Kiel, *Sefer Beresit*, 48 (Hebrew page numbers), shows that this is the Targum and Rabbinic tradition. (Futato does not like the rendering "mist" because according to his definition the English word does not quite match the meaning "rain-cloud"; but it seems clear that Delitzsch means something close to the sense for which Futato argues.)

²⁹ It is possible to infer from the context that the particular nuance of the process aspect is inceptive action, "it was beginning to go up. ... it was beginning to water." Waltke and O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, §31.2c, support such a possibility, but their examples are not all persuasive (2 Sam 15:37 is the best, cf. RSV).

³⁰ This harmonization, by the way, which began with the *possibility* that the "days" were not the 24-hour kind, seems actually to, *favor* the likelihood that they represent longer spans of time. The passage itself supplies an explicit reason why the vegetation had not grown, namely the absence of rain and man (verse 5). In order for this to hold there must be some lapse of time longer than a few days.

in the day that³¹ the LORD God made earth and heaven.
 (5) When no bush of the field³² was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up--for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, (6) and a mist was going up³³ from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground--(7) then the Lord God formed the man³⁴ of dust³⁵ from the ground,³⁶ and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.³⁷ (8) And the Lord God planted³⁸ a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

³¹ I.e., "when the Lord God made." For this meaning of *beyom* followed by an infinitive construct see Brown-Driver-Briggs, 400a; P Jouon and T. Muraoka, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Biblico, 1993), §129p A.2.

³² Futato, "Because it had rained," 4, argues that the only legitimate interpretation of *siah hassddeh* "bush of the field" must be "wild shrubs of the steppe," in contrast to the *seb hassadeh* "small plant of the field," which he takes to be cultivated (a possibility mentioned in Kidner, "Genesis 2:5, 6," 109).

³³ Taking the verb *ya'aleh*, as most do, as a simple Qal imperfect with 'ed as subject. Futato, "Because it had rained," 8, argues that we should interpret the verb as a Hiphil imperfect with the Lord God as subject of both it and the next verb *wehisqa* "and it was a mist that he [i.e., the Lord God] was bringing up, and he was watering." This is possible, but the reasons he offers do not settle the question. (1) When the first element of a clause is not the verb, as is here the case, it is more expected for that element to be the subject. (2) A noun in the semantic category "mist/cloud" can as easily be the subject of the Qal of the verb (cf. 1 Kgs 18:44) as the object of the Hiphil (cf. Ps 135:7). (3) Similarly, it is quite proper for a source of water to be the subject of the next verb, *wehisqa* "and was watering" (as it is in verse 10). The credibility of his argument that "God would be the explicit solver of both the problem of no rain and the problem of no cultivator" (8-9) depends in turn on the prior acceptance of his literary reading for the text, and hence cannot establish that reading in opposition to others. Hence I see no reason not to translate this in the usual way.

³⁴ The Hebrew has a definite article *ha'ddam*, "the man," namely the first human. I would take the article as anaphoric to the mention of "man" in verse 5, which does not have the article: literally, "and as for man, there was none to work." Without the article it becomes the proper name Adam in verse 20. In verse 23, using different terms, the "woman" (*'issa*) is taken from the "man" (*is*).

³⁵ That is, loose soil.

³⁶ Many suppose that there is a play on words here: "human" is *'adam*, while "ground" is *'adama*, from which man was made and now to which he will return because of sin (cf. 3:19). Since, however, in verse 19 God also "forms" the animals "from the ground," we must not push this too far.

³⁷ It is difficult to give a good literal translation of this term (*nepes hayya*, traditionally "living soul": cf. 1:21, 24, 30; 2:7, 19) and still have elegant English: "living animated being" would be the closest. Delitzsch, *Genesis*, 94, points out that since a *nepes* (often rendered "soul") animates a body, the expression denotes "animated material beings, bodies having souls." In I Cor 15:45, Paul employs the LXX rendering of this expression, $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta\ \zeta\omega\sigma\alpha$ ("living soul") in the sense of "living natural being," to contrast with the supernatural life he denotes by $\nu\epsilon\phi\upsilon\alpha$ ("spirit") in verses 44-46.

³⁸ In Collins, "The *wayyiqtol* as pluperfect," 140 n.75, I reject the NIV's making this pluperfect: "the Lord God *had* planted." I think the end of the verse, *'aser yasar* "whom he had formed," places the formation of verse 7 prior to the planting of verse 8.

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Philosophical and Scientific Pointers to Creatio ex Nihilo

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To answer Leibniz's question of why something exists rather than nothing, we must posit three alternatives: the universe either had a beginning or had no beginning; if it had a beginning, this was either caused or uncaused; if caused, the cause was either personal or not personal. Four lines of evidence, two philosophical and two scientific, point to a beginning of the universe. If the universe had a beginning, it is inconceivable that it could have sprung uncaused out of absolute nothingness. Finally, the cause of the universe must be personal in order to have a temporal effect produced by an eternal cause. This confirms the biblical doctrine of **creatio ex nihilo**.

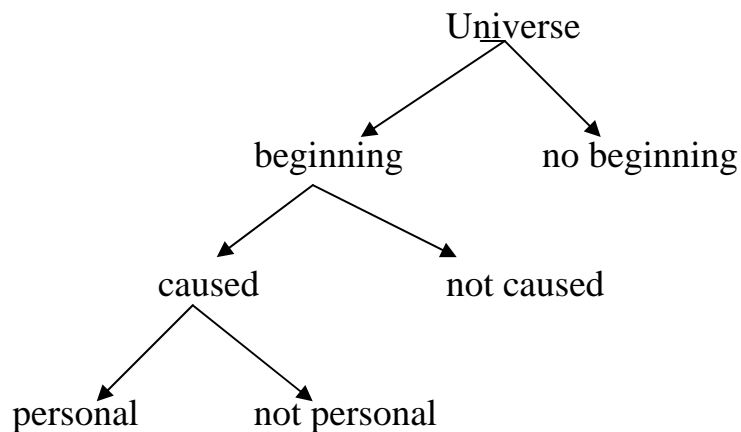
"... The first question which should rightly be asked," Wrote Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, is "Why is there something rather than nothing?"¹ I want you to think about that for a moment. Why does anything exist at all, rather than nothing? Why does the universe, or matter, or anything at all exist, instead of just nothing, instead of just empty space?

Many great minds have been puzzled by this problem. For example, in his biography of the renowned philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, Norman Malcolm reports,

... he said that he sometimes had a certain experience which could best be described by saying that 'when I have it, *I wonder at the existence of the world*. I am then inclined to use such phrases as "How extraordinary that anything "should exist!" or "How extraordinary that the world should exist!"'²

Similarly, the English philosopher J. J. C. Smart has said, ". . . my mind often seems to reel under the immense significance this question has for me. That anything exists at all does seem to me a matter for the deepest awe."³

Why *does* something exist instead of nothing? Unless we are prepared to believe that the universe simply popped into existence uncaused out of nothing, then the answer must be: something exists because there is an eternal, uncaused being for which no further explanation is possible. But who or what is this eternal, uncaused being? Leibniz identified it with God. But many modern philosophers have identified it with the universe itself. Now this is exactly the position of the atheist: the universe itself is uncaused and eternal; as Russell remarks, ". . . the universe is just there, and that's all."⁴ But this means, of course, that all we are left with is futility and despair, for man's life would then be without ultimate significance, value, or purpose. Indeed, Russell himself acknowledges that it is only upon the "firm foundation of unyielding despair" that life can be faced.⁵ But are there reasons to think that the universe is not eternal and uncaused, that there is something more? I think that there are. For we can consider the universe by means of a series of logical alternatives:



By proceeding through these alternatives, I think we can demonstrate that it is reasonable to believe that the universe is not eternal, but that it had a beginning and was caused by a personal being, and that therefore a personal Creator of the universe exists.

Did the Universe Begin?

The first and most crucial step to be considered in this argument is the first: that the universe began to exist. There are four reasons why I think it is more reasonable to believe that the universe had a beginning. First, I shall expound two philosophical arguments and, second, two scientific confirmations.

The first philosophical argument:

1. *An actual infinite cannot exist.*
2. *A beginningless series of events in time is an actual infinite.*
3. *Therefore, a beginningless series of events in time cannot exist.*

A collection of things is said to be actually infinite only if a part of it is equal to the whole of it. For example, which is greater? 1, 2, 3, . . . or 0, 1, 2, 3, . . . According to prevailing mathematical thought, the answer is that they are equivalent because they are both actually infinite. This seems strange because there is an extra number in one series that cannot be found in the other. But this only goes to show that in an actually infinite collection, a part of the collection is equal to the whole of the collection. For the same reason, mathematicians state that the series of even numbers is the same size as the series of all natural numbers, even though the series of all natural numbers contains all the even numbers plus an infinite number of odd numbers as well. So a collection is actually infinite if a part of it is equal to the whole of it.

Now the concept of an *actual* infinite needs to be sharply distinguished from the concept of a *potential* infinite. A potential infinite is a collection that is increasing

without limit but is at all times finite. The concept of potential infinity usually comes into play when we add to or subtract from something without stopping. Thus, a finite distance may be said to contain a potentially infinite number of smaller finite distances. This does not mean that there actually are an infinite number of parts in a finite distance, but rather it means that one can keep on dividing endlessly. But one will never reach an "infinieth" division. Infinity merely serves as the limit to which the process approaches. Thus, a potential infinite is not truly infinite--it is simply indefinite. It is at all points finite but always increasing.

To sharpen the distinction between an actual and a potential infinite, we can draw some comparisons between them. The concept of actual infinity is used in set theory to designate a set which has an actually infinite number of members in it. But the concept of potential infinity finds no place in set theory. This is because the members of a set must be definite, whereas a potential infinite is indefinite--it acquires new members as it grows. Thus, set theory has only either finite or actually infinite sets. The proper place for the concept of the potential infinite is found in mathematical analysis, as in infinitesimal calculus. There a process may be said to increase or diminish to infinity, in the sense that the process can be continued endlessly with infinity as its terminus.⁶ The concept of actual infinity does not pertain in these operations because an infinite number of operations is never actually made. According to the great German mathematician David Hilbert, the chief difference between an actual and a potential infinite is that a potential infinite is always something growing toward a limit of infinity, while an actual infinite is a completed totality with an actually infinite number of things.⁷ A good example contrasting these two types of infinity is the series of past, present, and future events. For if the universe is eternal, as the atheist claims, then there have occurred in the past

an actually infinite number of events. But from any point in the series of events, the number of future events is potentially infinite. Thus, if we pick 1845, the birthyear of Georg Cantor, who discovered infinite sets, as our point of departure, we can see that past events constitute an actual infinity while future events constitute a potential infinity. This is because the past is realized and complete, whereas the future is never fully actualized, but is always finite and always increasing. In the following discussion, it is exceedingly important to keep the concepts of actual infinity and potential infinity distinct and not to confuse them.

A second clarification that I must make concerns the word "exist." When I say that an actual infinite cannot exist, I mean "exist in the real world" or "exist outside the mind." I am not in any way questioning the legitimacy of using the concept of actual infinity in the realm of mathematics, for this is a realm of thought only. What I am arguing is that an actual infinite cannot exist in the real world of stars and planets and rocks and men. What I will argue in no way threatens the use of the actual infinite as a concept in mathematics. But I do think it is absurd that an actual infinite could exist in the real world.

I think that probably the best way to show this is to use examples to illustrate the absurdities that would result if an actual infinite could exist in reality. For suppose we have a library that has an actually infinite number of books, on its shelves. Imagine furthermore that there are only two colors, black and red, and these are placed on the shelves alternately: black, red, black, red, and so forth. Now if somebody told us that the number of black books and the number of red books is the same, we would probably not be too surprised. But would we believe someone who told us that the number of black books is the same as the number of black books plus red books? For in this latter collection there are all the black books plus an infinite number of red books as well. Or imagine there are

three colors of books or four or five or a hundred. Would you believe someone if he told you that there are as many books in a single color as there are in the whole collection? Or imagine that there are an infinite number of colors of books. I'll bet you would think that there would be one book per color in the infinite collection. You would be wrong. If the collection is actually infinite then according to mathematicians, there could be for each of the infinite colors an infinite number of books. So you would have an infinity of infinities. And yet it would still be true that if you took all the books of all the colors and

added them together, you wouldn't have any more books than if you had taken just the books of a single color.

Suppose each book had a number printed on its spine. Because the collection is actually infinite, that means that every possible number is printed on some book. Now this means that we could not add another book to the library. For what number would we give to it? All the numbers have been used up! Thus, the new book could not have a number. But this is absurd, since objects in reality can be numbered. So if an infinite library could exist, it would be impossible to add another book to it. But this conclusion is obviously false, for all we have to do is tear out a page from each of the first hundred books, add a title page, stick them together, and put this new book on the shelf. It would be easy to add to the library. So the only answer must be that an actually infinite library could not exist.

But suppose we *could* add to the library. Suppose I put a book on the shelf. According to the mathematicians, the number of books in the whole collection is the same as before. But how can this be? If I put the book on the shelf, there is one more book in the collection. If I take it off the shelf, there is one less book. I can see myself add and remove the book. Am I really to believe that when I add the book there are no more books in the collection and when I remove it there are no less books? Suppose I add an infinity of books to the collection. Am I seriously to believe there are no more books in the collection than before? Suppose I add an infinity of infinities of books to the collection. Is there not now one single book more in the collection than before? I find this hard to believe.

But now let's reverse the process. Suppose we decide to loan out some of the books. Suppose we loan out book number 1. Isn't there now one less book in the collection? Suppose we loan out all the odd-numbered books. We have loaned out an infinite number of books, and yet

mathematicians would say there are no less books in the collection. Now when we loaned out all these books, that left an awful lot of gaps on the shelves. Suppose we push all the books together again and close the gaps. All these gaps added together would add up to an infinite distance. But, according to mathematicians, after you pushed the books together, the shelves will still be full, the same as before you loaned any out! Now suppose once more we loaned out every other book. There would still be no less books in the collection than before. And if we pushed all the books together again, the shelves would still be full. In fact, we could do this an infinite number of times, and there would never be one less book in the collection and the shelves would always remain full. But suppose we loaned out book numbers 4, 5, 6, . . . out to infinity. At a single stroke, the collection would be virtually wiped out, the shelves emptied, and the infinite library reduced to finitude. And yet, we have removed exactly the same number of books this time as when we first loaned out all the odd numbered books! Can anybody believe such a library could exist in reality?

These examples serve to illustrate that *an actual infinite cannot exist* in the real world. Again I want to underline the fact that what I have argued in no way attempts to undermine the theoretical system bequeathed by Cantor to modern mathematics. Indeed, some of the most eager enthusiasts of trans-finite mathematics, such as David Hilbert, are only too ready to agree that the concept of actual infinite is an idea only and has no relation to the real world. So we can conclude the first step: an actual infinite cannot exist.

The second step is: *a beginningless series of events in time is an actual infinite*. By "event" I mean something that happens. Thus, this step is concerned with change, and it holds that if the series of past events or changes just goes back and back and never had a beginning, then, considered all together, these events constitute an actually

infinite collection. Let me provide an example. Suppose we ask someone where a certain star came from. He replies that it came from an explosion in a star that existed before it. Suppose we ask again, where did that star come from? Well, it came from another star before it. And where did that star come from?--from another star before it; and so on and so on. This series of stars would be an example of a beginningless series of events in time. Now if the universe has existed forever, then the series of all past events taken together constitutes an actual infinite. This is because for every event in the past, there was an event before it. Thus, the series of past events would be infinite. Nor could it be potentially infinite only, for we have seen that the past is completed and actual; only the future can be described as a potential infinite. Therefore, it seems pretty obvious that a beginningless series of events in time is an actual infinite.

But that leads us to our conclusion: *therefore, a beginningless series of events in time cannot exist.* We have seen that an actual infinite cannot exist in reality. Since a beginningless series of events in time is an actual infinite, such a series cannot exist. That means the series of all past events must be finite and have a beginning. But because the universe is the series of all events, this means that the universe must have had a beginning.

Let me give a few examples to make the point clear. We have seen that if an actual infinite could exist in reality, it would be impossible to add to it. But the series of events in time is being added to every day. Or at least so it appears. If the series were actually infinite, then the number of events that have occurred up to the present moment is no greater than the number of events up to, say, 1789. In fact, you can pick any point in the past. The number of events that have occurred up to the present moment would be no greater than the number of events up to that point, no matter how long ago it might be.

Or take another example. Suppose Earth and Jupiter

have been orbiting the sun from eternity. Suppose that it takes the Earth one year to complete one orbit, and that it takes Jupiter three years to complete one orbit. Thus for every one orbit Jupiter completes, Earth completes three. Now here is the question: if they have been orbiting from eternity, which has completed more orbits? The answer is: they are equal. But this seems absurd, since the longer they went, the farther and farther Jupiter got behind, since every time Jupiter went around the sun once, Earth went around three times. How then could they possibly be equal?

Or, finally, suppose we meet a man who claims to have been counting from eternity, and now he is finishing: -5, -4, -3, -2, -1, 0. Now this is impossible. For, we may ask, why didn't he finish counting yesterday or the day before or the year before? By then an infinity of time had already elapsed, so that he should have finished. The fact is we could never find anyone completing such a task because at any previous point he would have already finished. But what this means is that there could never be a point in the past at which he finished counting. In fact we could never find him counting at all. For he would have already finished. But if no matter how far back in time we go, we never find him counting, then it cannot be true that he has been counting from eternity. This shows once more that the series of past events cannot be beginningless. For if you could not count numbers from eternity, neither could you have events from eternity.

These examples underline the absurdity of a beginningless series of events in time. Because such a series is an actual infinite, and an actual infinite cannot exist, a beginningless series of events in time cannot exist. This means that the universe began to exist, which is the point that we set out to prove.

The second philosophical argument:

1. *The series of events in time is a collection formed by adding one member after another.*
2. *A collection formed by adding one member after another cannot be actually infinite.*
3. *Therefore, the series of events in time cannot be actually infinite.*

This argument does not argue that an actual infinite cannot exist. But it does argue that an actual infinite cannot come to exist by the members of a collection being added one after the other.

The series of events in time is a collection formed by

adding one member after another. This point is pretty obvious. When we consider the collection of all past events, it is obvious that those events did not exist simultaneously--all at once--but they existed one after another in time: we have one event, then another after that, then another, then another, and so on. So when we talk about the collection of "all past events," we are talking about a collection that has been formed by adding one member after another.

The second step is the crucial one: *a collection formed by adding one member after another cannot be actually infinite.* Why?--because no matter how many members a person added to the collection, he could always add one more. Therefore, he would never arrive at infinity. Sometimes this is called the impossibility of counting to infinity. For no matter how many numbers you had counted, you could always count one more. You would never arrive at infinity. Or sometimes this is called the impossibility of traversing the infinite. For you could never cross an infinite distance. Imagine a man running up a flight of stairs. Suppose every time his foot strikes the top step, another step appears above it. It is clear that the man could run forever, but he would never cross all the steps because you could always add one more step.

Now notice that this impossibility has nothing to do with the amount of time available. It is of the very nature of the infinite that it cannot be formed by adding one member after another, regardless of the amount of time available. Thus, the only way an infinite collection could come to exist in the real world would be by having all the members created simultaneously. For example, if our library of infinite books were to exist in the real world, it would have to be created instantaneously by God. God would say: "Let there be. . . !" and the library would come into existence all at once. But it would be impossible to form the library by adding one book at a time, for you would never arrive at infinity.

Therefore, our conclusion must be: *the series of events in time cannot be actually infinite*. Suppose there were, for example, an infinite number of days prior to today. Then today would never arrive. For it is impossible to cross an infinite number of days to reach today. But obviously, today has arrived. Therefore, we know that prior to today there cannot have been an infinite number of days. That means that the number of days is finite and therefore the universe had a beginning. Contemporary philosophers have shown themselves to be impotent to refute this reasoning.⁹ Thus, one of them asks,

If an infinite series of events has preceded the present moment, how did we get to the present moment? How could we get to the present moment--where we obviously are now--if the present moment was preceded by an infinite series of events?¹⁰

Concluding that this difficulty has not been overcome and that the issue is still in dispute, Hospers passes on to another subject, leaving the argument unrefuted. Similarly another philosopher comments rather weakly, "It is difficult to show exactly what is wrong with this argument," and with that remark moves on without further ado.¹¹

Therefore, since the series of events in time is a collection formed by adding one member after another, and since such a collection cannot be actually infinite, the series of events in time cannot be actually infinite. And once more, since the universe is nothing else than the series of events, the universe must have had a beginning, which is precisely the point we wanted to prove.

The first scientific confirmation: the evidence from the expansion of the universe. Prior to the 1920's, scientists assumed that the universe as a whole was a stationary object--it was not going anywhere. But in 1929 an astronomer named Edwin Hubble contended that this was not true. Hubble observed that the light from distant galaxies appeared to be redder than it should be. He explained this

by proposing that the universe is expanding. Therefore, the light from the stars is affected since they are moving away from us. But this is the interesting part: Hubble not only showed that the universe is expanding, but that *it is expanding the same in all directions*. To get a picture of this, imagine a balloon with dots painted on it. As you blow up the balloon, the dots get further and further apart. Now those dots are just like the galaxies in space. Everything in the universe is expanding outward. Thus, the relations in the universe do not change, only the distances.

Now the staggering implication of this is that this means that at some point in the past, *the entire known universe*

was contracted down to a single point, from which it has been expanding ever since. The farther back one goes in the past, the smaller the universe becomes, so that one finally reaches a point of infinite density from which the universe began to expand. That initial event has come to be known as the "big bang."

How long ago did the big bang occur? Only during the 1970's have accurate estimates become available. In a very important series of six articles published in 1974 and 1975, Allan Sandage and G. A. Tammann estimate that the big bang occurred about 15 billion years ago.¹² Therefore, according to the big bang model, the universe began to exist with a great explosion from a state of infinite density about 15 billion years ago. Four of the world's most prominent astronomers describe that event in these words.

The universe began from a state of infinite density. Space and time were created in that event and so was all the matter in the universe. It is not meaningful to ask what happened before the big bang; it is somewhat like asking what is north of the north pole. Similarly, it is not sensible to ask where the big bang took place. The point-universe was not an object isolated in space; it was the entire universe, and so the only answer can be that the big bang happened everywhere.¹³

This event that marked the beginning of the universe becomes all the more amazing when one reflects on the fact that a state of "infinite density" is synonymous to "nothing." There can be no object that possesses infinite density, for if it had any mass at all, it would not be *in-finitely* dense. Therefore, as astronomer Fred Hoyle points out, the big bang theory requires the creation of matter from nothing. This is because as one goes back in time, he reaches a point at which, in Hoyle's words, the universe was "shrunk down to nothing at all."¹⁴ Thus, what the big bang model requires is that the universe had a beginning and was created out of nothing.

Now some people are bothered with the idea that the universe began from nothing. This is too close to the Christian doctrine of creation to allow atheistic minds to be comfortable. But if one rejects the big bang model, he has apparently only two alternatives: the steady state model or the oscillating model. Let's examine each of these.

The steady state model holds that the universe never had a beginning but has always existed in the same state. Ever since this model was first proposed in 1948, it has never been very convincing. According to S. L. Jaki, this theory never secured "a single piece of experimental verification."¹⁵ It always seemed to be trying to explain away the facts rather than explain them. According to Jaki, the proponents of this model were actually motivated by "openly anti-theological, or rather anti-Christian motivations."¹⁶ A second strike against this theory is the fact that a count of galaxies emitting radio waves indicates that there were once more radio sources in the past than there are today. Therefore, the universe is not in a steady state after all. But the real nails in the coffin for the steady state theory came in 1965, when A. A. Penzlas and R. W. Wilson discovered that the entire universe is bathed with a background of microwave radiation. This radiation background indicates that the universe was once in a very hot and very dense state. In the steady state model no such state could have existed, since the universe was supposed to be the same from eternity. Therefore, the steady state model has been abandoned by virtually everyone. According to Ivan King, "The steady-state theory has now been laid to rest, as a result of clear-cut observations of how things have changed with time."¹⁷

But what of the oscillating model of the universe? John Gribbin describes this model,

The biggest problem with the big bang theory of the origin of the universe is philosophical--perhaps even theological--what

was there before the bang? This problem alone was sufficient to give a great initial impetus to the steady state theory, but with that theory now sadly in conflict with the observations the best way around this initial difficulty is provided by a model in which the universe expands, collapses back again, and repeats the cycle indefinitely.¹⁸

According to this model, the universe is sort of like a spring, expanding and contracting from eternity. It is only in the last three or four years that this model has been discredited. The key question here is whether the universe is "open" or "closed." If it is "closed," then the expansion will reach a certain point, and then the force of gravity will pull everything together again. But if the universe is "open," then the expansion will never stop, but will just go on and on forever. Now clearly, if the universe is open, then the oscillating model is false. For if the universe is open, it will never contract again.

Scientific evidence seems to indicate that the universe is open. The crucial factor here is the density of the universe. Scientists have estimated that if there are more than about three hydrogen atoms per cubic meter on the average throughout the universe, then the universe would be closed. That may not sound like very much, but remember that most of the universe is just empty space. I shall not go into all the technicalities of how scientists measure the density of the universe,¹⁹ but let me simply report their conclusions. According to the evidence, the universe would have to be at least ten times denser than it is for the universe to be closed.²⁰ Therefore, the universe is open by a wide margin. Let me share with you the conclusion of Alan Sandage: (1) the universe is open, (2) the expansion will not reverse, and (3) the universe has happened only once and the expansion will never stop.²¹ The evidence therefore appears to rule out the oscillating model, since it requires a closed universe. But just to drive the point home, let me add that the oscillating

model of the universe is only a theoretical possibility, not a real possibility. As Dr. Tinsley of Yale observes, in oscillating models

. . . even though the mathematics says that the universe oscillates, there is no known physics to reverse the collapse and bounce back to a new expansion. The physics seems to say that those models start from the big bang, expand, collapse, then end.²²

Hence, it would be impossible for the universe to be oscillating from eternity. Therefore, this model is doubly impossible.

The second scientific confirmation: the evidence from thermodynamics. According to the second law of thermodynamics, processes taking place in a closed system always tend toward a state of equilibrium. In other words,

unless energy is constantly being fed into a system, the processes in the system will tend to run down and quit. For example, if I had a bottle that was a sealed vacuum inside, and I introduced into it some molecules of gas, the gas would spread itself out evenly inside the bottle. It is virtually impossible for the molecules to retreat, for example, into one corner of the bottle and remain. This is why when you walk into a room, the air in the room never separates suddenly into oxygen at one end and nitrogen at the other. It is also why when you step into your bath you may be confident that it will be pleasantly warm instead of frozen solid at one end and boiling at the other. It is clear that life would not be possible in a world in which the second law of thermodynamics did not operate.

Now our interest in the law is what happens when it is applied to the universe as a whole. The universe is a gigantic closed system, since it is everything there is and there is nothing outside it.²³ What this seems to imply then is that, given enough time, the universe and all its processes will run down and the entire universe will slowly grind to a halt. This is known as the heat death of the universe. Once the universe reaches this state, no further change is possible. The universe is dead.

There are two possible types of heat death for the universe. If the universe is "closed," then it will die a hot death. Tinsley describes such a state:

If the average density of matter in the universe is great enough, the mutual gravitational attraction between bodies will eventually slow the expansion to a halt. The universe will then contract and collapse into a hot fireball. There is no known physical mechanism that could reverse a catastrophic big crunch. Apparently, if the universe becomes dense enough, it is in for a hot death.²⁴

If the universe is closed, it is in for a fiery death from which it will never re-emerge. But suppose, as is more

likely, the universe is "open." Tinsley describes the final state of this universe:

If the universe has a low density, its death will be cold. It will expand forever, at a slower and "lower rate. Galaxies will turn all of their gas into stars, and the stars will burn out. Our own sun will become a cold, dead remnant, floating among the corpses of other stars in an increasingly isolated milky way.²⁵

Eventually, equilibrium will prevail throughout, and the entire universe will reach its final state from which no change will occur.

Now the question that needs to be asked is this: If given enough time, the universe will reach heat death, then why is it not in a state of heat death now if it has existed forever, from eternity? If the universe did not begin to exist, then it should now be in a state of equilibrium. Its energy should be all used up. For example, I have a very loud wind-up alarm clock. If I hear that the clock is ticking --which is no problem, believe me--then I know that at some point in the recent past, it was wound up and has been running down since then. It is the same with the universe. Since it has not yet run down, this means, in the words of one baffled scientist, "In some way the universe must have been wound up."²⁶

Some scientists have tried to escape this conclusion by arguing that the universe oscillates back and forth from eternity and so never reaches a final state of equilibrium. I have already observed that such a model of the universe is a physical impossibility. But suppose it were possible. The fact is that the thermodynamic properties of this model imply the very beginning of the universe that its proponents seek to avoid. For as several scientists have pointed out, each time the model universe expands it would expand a little further than before. Therefore if you traced the expansions back in time they would get smaller and smaller and smaller. Therefore, in the

words of one scientific team, "The multicycle model has an infinite future, but only a finite past."²⁷ As yet another writer points out, this implies that the oscillating model of the universe still requires an origin of the universe prior to the smallest cycle.²⁸

Traditionally, two objections have been urged against the thermodynamic argument.²⁹ First, the argument does not work if the universe is infinite. I have two replies to this. (a) The universe is not, in fact, infinite. An actually spatially infinite universe would involve all the absurdities entailed in the existence of an actual infinite. But if the universe is torus-shaped, then it may be both open and finite. The objection is therefore irrelevant (b) Even if the universe were infinite, it would still come to equilibrium. As one scientist explained in a letter to me, if every finite region of the universe came to equilibrium, then the whole universe would come to equilibrium.³⁰ This would be true even if it had an infinite number of finite regions. This is like saying that if every part of a fence is green, then the whole fence is green, even if there are an infinite number of pickets in the fence. Since every single finite region of the universe would suffer heat death, so would the whole universe. Therefore, the objection is invalid.

The second objection is that maybe the present state of the universe is just a fluctuation in an overall state of equilibrium. In other words, the present energy is sort of like just the ripple on the surface of a still pond. But this objection loses all sense of proportion. Fluctuations are so tiny, they are important only in systems where you have a few atoms. In a universe at equilibrium, fluctuations would be imperceptible.³¹ A chart showing fluctuations in such a universe would be simply a straight line. Therefore, since the present universe is in disequilibrium, what are we to conclude? According to the English scientist P. C. W. Davies, the universe must have been created a finite time ago and is in the process of winding down.³² He says the present disequilibrium cannot be

a fluctuation from a prior state of equilibrium, because prior to this creation event the universe simply did not exist. Thus, Davies concludes, even though we may not like it, we must conclude that the universe's energy "was simply 'put in' at the creation as an initial condition."³³

Thus, we have two philosophical arguments and two scientific confirmations of the point we set out to defend: the universe began to exist. In light of these four reasons, I think we are amply justified in affirming the first alternative of our first disjunction: *the universe had a beginning*.

Was the Beginning Caused?

Having concluded that the evidence points to a beginning of the universe, let's now turn to our second set

of alternatives: the beginning of the universe was either caused or not caused. I am not going to give a lengthy defense of the point that the beginning of the universe must have been caused. I do not think I need to. For probably no one in his right mind sincerely believes that the universe could pop into existence uncaused out of nothing. Even the famous sceptic David Hume admitted that it is preposterous to think anything could come into existence without a cause.³⁴ This is doubly true with regard to the entire universe. As the English philosopher C. D. Broad confessed, "I cannot really believe in anything beginning to exist without being caused by something else which existed before and up to the moment when the thing in question began to exist."³⁵ As still another philosopher has said, "It seems quite inconceivable that our universe could have sprung from an absolute void. If there is anything we find inconceivable it is that something could arise from nothing,"³⁶ The old principle that "out of nothing nothing comes" is so manifestly true that a sincere denial of this point is practically impossible.

This puts the atheist on the spot. For as Anthony Kenny explains, "A proponent of (the big bang) theory, at least if he is an atheist, must believe that the matter of the universe came from nothing and by nothing."³⁷ That is a pretty hard pill to swallow. In terms of sheer "believability," I find it intellectually easier to believe in a God who is the cause of the universe than in the universe's popping into existence uncaused out of nothing or in the universe's having existed for infinite time without a beginning. For me these last two positions are intellectually inconceivable, and it would take more faith for me to believe in them than to believe that God exists. But at any rate, we are not dependent upon just "believability," for we have already seen that both philosophical and empirical reasoning points to a beginning for the universe. So the alternatives are only two: either the universe was caused to exist or it sprang into existence wholly uncaused

out of nothing about fifteen billion years ago. The first alternative is eminently more plausible.

It is interesting to examine the attitude of scientists toward the philosophical and theological implications of their own big bang model. It is evident that there are such implications, for as one scientist remarks, "The problem of the origin (of the universe) involves a certain metaphysical aspect which may be either appealing or revolting."³⁸ Unfortunately, the man of science is, as Albert Einstein once observed, "a poor philosopher,"³⁹ For these implications seem either to escape or not to interest most scientists. Since no empirical information is available about what preceded the big bang, scientists simply ignore the issue. Thus, Hoyle, after explaining that the big bang model cannot inform us as to where the matter came from or why the big bang occurred, comments, "It is not usual in present day cosmological discussions to seek an answer to this question; the question and its answer are taken to be outside the range of scientific discussion."⁴⁰ But while this attitude may satisfy the scientist, it can never satisfy the philosopher. For as one scientist admits, the big bang model only describes the initial conditions of the universe, but it cannot explain them.⁴¹ As yet another astronomer concludes, "So the question 'How was the matter created in the first place?' is left unanswered."⁴² Thus, science begs off answering the really ultimate question or where the universe came from. Scientific evidence points to a beginning of the universe; as rigorous scientists we may stop there and bar further inquiry, but as thinking men must we not inquire further until we come to the cause of the beginning of the universe?

Either the universe was caused to exist or it just came into existence out of nothing by nothing. Scientists refuse to discuss the question; but philosophers admit that it is impossible to believe in something's coming to exist uncaused out of nothing. Therefore, I think that an unprej-

udiced inquirer will have to agree that the beginning of the universe was caused, which is the second point we set out to prove: the universe was caused to exist.

Now this is a truly remarkable conclusion. For this means that the universe was caused to exist by something beyond it and greater than it. Think of what that means! This ought to fill us with awe, for it is no secret that the Bible begins with these words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Personal or Impersonal Creator?

I think there is good reason to believe that the cause of the universe is a personal creator. This is our third set of alternatives: *personal or not personal*.

The first event in the series of past events was, as we have seen, the beginning of the universe. Furthermore, we have argued that the event was caused. Now the question is: If the cause of the universe is eternal, then why isn't the universe also eternal, since it is the effect of the cause? Let me illustrate what I mean. Suppose we say the cause of water's freezing is the temperature's falling below 0 degrees. Whenever the temperature is below 0 degrees, the water is frozen. Therefore, if the temperature is always below 0 degrees, the water is always frozen. Once the cause is given, the effect must follow. So if the cause were there from eternity, the effect would also be there from eternity. If the temperature were below 0 degrees from eternity, then any water around would be frozen from eternity. But this seems to imply that if the cause of the universe existed from eternity then the universe would have to exist from eternity. And this we have seen to be false.

One might say that the cause came to exist just before the first event. But this will not work, for then the cause's coming into existence would be the first event, and we must ask all over again for its cause. But this cannot go on forever, for we have seen that a beginningless series

of events cannot exist. So there must be an absolutely first event, before which there was no change, no previous event. We have seen that this first event was caused. But the question then is: how can a first event come to exist if the cause of that event is always there? Why isn't the effect as eternal as the cause? It seems to me that there is only one way out of this dilemma. That is to say that the cause of the universe is personal and chooses to create the universe in time. In this way God could exist changelessly from eternity, but choose to create the world in time. By "choose" I do not mean God changes his mind. I mean God intends from eternity to create a world in time. Thus, the cause is eternal, but the effect is not. God chooses from eternity to create a world with a beginning;

therefore, a world with a beginning comes to exist. Hence, it seems to me that the only way a universe can come to exist is if a Personal Creator of the universe exists. And I think we are justified in calling a personal creator of the universe by the name "God."

I would just like to make a few concluding remarks on God's relationship to time. Many people say God is outside time. But this is not what the Bible says. According to James Barr in his book *Biblical Words for Time*, the Bible does not make it clear whether God is eternal in the sense that he is outside time or whether he is eternal in the sense of being everlasting throughout all time.⁴³ Thus, the issue must be decided philosophically. It seems to me that prior to creation God is outside time, or rather there is no time at all. For time cannot exist unless there is change. And prior to creation God would have to be changeless. Otherwise, you would get an infinite series of past events in God's life, and we have seen such an infinite series is impossible. So God would be changeless and, hence, timeless prior to creation. I think that the doctrine of the Trinity can help us to understand this. Before creation, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit existed in a perfect and changeless love relationship. God was not lonely before creation. In the tri-unity of his own being, he had full and perfect personal relationships. So what was God doing before creation? Someone has said, "He was preparing hell for those who pry into mysteries." Not at all He was enjoying the fullness of divine personal relationships with an eternal plan for the creation and salvation of human persons. The Bible says Christ "had been chosen by God before the creation of the world, and was revealed in these last days for your sake."⁴⁴ Nor was this plan decided on several eons ago. It is an eternal plan: The Bible says, "God did this according to his eternal purpose which he achieved through Christ Jesus our Lord."⁴⁵ Why did God do this? Not because he needed us, but simply out of his grace and love.

So in my opinion, God was timeless prior to creation, and He created time along with the world. From that point on God places Himself within time so that He can interact with the world He has created. And someday God will be done with this creation. The universe will not, in fact, suffer cold death, for God will have done with it by then. The Bible says,

You, Lord, in the beginning created the earth,
and with your own hands you made the heavens.
They will all disappear, but you will remain;
they will all grow old like clothes.
You will fold them up like a coat,
and they will be changed like clothes.
But you are always the same,
and you will never grow old.⁴⁶

We have thus concluded to a personal Creator of the universe who exists changelessly and independently prior to creation and in time subsequent to creation. This is the central idea of what theists mean by "God."

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GENESIS 38: ITS CONTEXT(S) AND FUNCTION

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Often analysis of the biblical text by critical scholars is based on perceived textual anomalies so subtle and obscure as to escape detection by all but those well trained in critical methodology. The discontinuity between Genesis 38 and its surrounding context, however, is readily apparent to even a casual reader.¹ Genesis 37 begins the Joseph story and continues to the point of Joseph's being sold to Potiphar in Egypt. Genesis 38 then shifts the focus back to Canaan and describes a rather peculiar incident in the life of Judah. Gen 39:1 returns to the Joseph story and essentially repeats the information in 37:36 before continuing to recount Joseph's experience in Potiphar's household.

Most modern scholars have supposed that chapter 38 and the Joseph story come from different sources,² but this does not account for why the material was inserted into the Joseph story at this point. Some have argued that there was simply no other place to put the Judah-Tamar story because Judah is still at home with his brothers in chapter 37 and moves to Egypt with his family before the Joseph

¹ I recently asked a class to read the Book of Genesis, and one student asked why Genesis 38 was placed where it is. The student described his feeling about the way the chapter interrupts the Joseph story as "like hitting a speed bump,"

² The general opinion among critical scholars is that material about Joseph comes from both the J and E sources; J combined the traditional material into something like the present Joseph story. According to this view, Genesis 38 represents an independent tradition which was incorporated into the present narrative by J. For discussion of these matters and references see, e.g., C. Westermann, *Genesis 37-50* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986) 15-23; 46-50; J. A. Emerton, "Some Problems in Genesis 38," *VT* 25 (1975) 346-60; G. W. Coats, *From Canaan to Egypt*, *CBQ MS* 4 (1976) 60-80, *Criswell Theological Review* 5.2 (1991) 247-257

story is concluded. The chronological indicators suggest that this is the perspective of the narrative. The statement in Gen 38:1, **ויהי בעת ההוא** ("it happened at that time"), while not a precise indicator of time, suggests that the incidents in 38 took place subsequent to the events in 37, while the circumstantial clause with which 39 begins, **ויוסף הורד** ("now Joseph had been taken to Egypt"), implies that the events of that chapter were simultaneous with those reported in 38.³ Despite the way the Judah-Tamar material interrupts the Joseph story, certain literary indicators have long been recognized as in some way tying the two stories together.⁴ The most striking of the parallels between the stories is the repetition of the words . . . **וישלח/שלחה** ("they/she sent... they/she said, 'Please recognize it'. . . he recognized . . . he said") at climactic points in chapters 37 and 38.⁵ Other suggested verbal parallels include the descent in 37:8:1 (**יִלְדוּ** "Judah went down") and the descent in 39:1 (**ויוסף יורד**, Joseph had been taken down). Other thematic parallels, will be pointed out below.

As Goldin points out, these literary and thematic indicators suggest that

whoever put the story as we have it in its present position, must have been guided by what seemed to him a sound literary principle: either a thematic or idiomatic connection must be present between the story of the sale of Joseph into bondage and the account of Judah's encounter with Tamar.⁶

³ Even as these general chronological indicators give some sense of sequence and chronology to the narrative, it must also be noted that the chronology appears to be presented from a Semitic perspective rather than a modern Western one. In particular, the chronology given in the Joseph story indicates that 22 years lapsed between the sale of Joseph by his brothers and the family's move to Egypt during the second year of the famine (37:2; 41:46, 47; 45:6, 11). The list of those entering Egypt includes the grandchildren of Judah (46:12). It is hard to imagine how Judah could have gotten married, had children, married them to Tamar, sent her away to let Shelah grow, fathered Perez by Tamar (after it is obvious to Tamar that Judah does not intend to give her to Shelah despite the "many days" that have passed and the fact that Shelah is now old enough for marriage), and have Perez grow up and father two children in the space of 22 years. For a discussion of this question see U. Cassuto, "The Story of Tamar and Judah," *Biblical and Oriental Studies* (2 vols.; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1973), 1.32-40.

⁴ These connectors were recognized by many of the rabbis. For a summary of these comments see Cassuto, 30-31; J. Goldin, "The Youngest Son or Where Does Genesis 38 Belong," *JBL* 96 (1977) 28-29; M. Kasher, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation* (New York: American Biblical Encyclopedia Society, 1962) 5.57-87.

⁵ 37:32-33 and 38:25-26.

⁶ Goldin, 29.

Despite these indications of an intended connection between Genesis 38 and the Joseph story in the final form of the biblical text, most scholars have focused on the meaning of the text at some point in a hypothetical prehistory of the text.⁷ Theories about the prehistory of the text, however, tend to be speculative and uncertain since they are generally based on reconstructions of history and culture for which there is minimal evidence. It seems more appropriate to consider the meaning of the passage in its present canonical context since it is there that the tradition is fixed in its final and authoritative form. In the context of the canon, though, there are sometimes a number of smaller contexts that influence and even determine the meaning of an individual pericope. A major task of exegesis involves the identification of the relevant contexts in order to determine how they affect the meaning of the passage. There are several different contexts that are appropriate for understanding the Judah-Tamar story.

Genesis 38 reports interesting facts about Judah, Tamar, the descendants of Judah, and about social institutions like levirate marriage. Placing this, perhaps once independent, unit into the Joseph story gives it a meaning and significance beyond those individual details. Its setting in the larger context of the Jacob story further expands the significance, but it is only when the unit is seen in the context of the patriarchal narrative and God's promise to Abraham that the full significance of the story can be appreciated. The various contexts are not contradictory, but complement one another, and each contributes uniquely to the full impact of the story intended by the biblical author.

First of all, Genesis 38 functions in its own right as a somewhat independent and self-contained story about Judah and his family.⁸ The story relates how Judah left the other members of his family, settled among the Canaanites and married a Canaanite woman. If one truly limits the context to Genesis 38, it is impossible to tell whether this was thought to be good or bad.⁹ In reality, of course, if the story circulated independently either before or after it was placed in its

⁷ Emerton ("Judah and Tamar," VT 29 [1979] 403) for example, has argued that "it cannot be taken for granted that a story in Genesis had a single meaning and purpose and retained them unchanged throughout its history first, probably, as an independent unit of oral tradition and then a part of a written document."

⁸ As O'Callaghan (Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association, "The Structure and Meaning of Genesis 38: Judah and Tamar" 5 [1981] 73-74) points out, both the significant vocabulary (numerous family/kinship terms) and the content (Judah's descendants and their offspring) make it clear that the subject of the chapter is Judah's family.

⁹ Emerton (VT 29, 410-13) argues that the story may have originated among the Canaanites, since there is no negative evaluation of the Canaanites and since Tamar, who was probably a Canaanite, is presented in a more favorable light than Judah or his sons.

present literary context in Genesis, the culture would have provided sufficient clues for evaluating Judah's conduct without the necessity of explicitly providing them in the story. What is clear from the narrative is that Judah's first two sons, Er and Onan, were wicked and the LORD took their lives. No details are given of Er's wickedness, but Onan's sin lay in his refusal to father a child with Tamar, his deceased brother's wife, as the responsibilities of levirate marriage required. Judah apparently concluded that since each son to whom Tamar was married had died, she was a threat to the family, and he devised an excuse for delaying her marriage to his remaining son Shelah--a delay that he intended to make permanent by simply ignoring her. Judah's attempt to thwart the intent of levirate marriage and thus deprive Tamar of her right to bear an heir for the family, and perhaps of her rightful place in society as well,¹⁰ reflects badly on Judah and provides certain details about both the values of the society and the institution of levirate marriage.

The story is also important in terms of the history of the tribe of Judah since Judah's behavior clearly jeopardized the future of the family (and in the broader biblical context the line of Messiah). Tamar's "virtue" in circumventing the problem of Judah's refusal not only protected her own rights but played a significant role in preserving what was to become one of the most prominent tribes in Israel. Earlier critical scholars supposed that the references to individuals actually refer to the various clans in the tribe of Judah and describe their settlement and movement in Canaan.¹¹ This idea, of course, presupposes a late date for the material, but as Emerton points out, it is possible that while the story is about individuals, it also reflects in a general way the later history and movement of the tribes.¹² Thus a story about individuals may have continued to be used beyond its relevance for family history because it generally reflected the situation of the various clans in the tribe of Judah. The subsequent popularity of the story is evident from the blessing given by the people of Bethlehem to Ruth when her engagement to Boaz (apparently through a form of levirate marriage) was announced.¹³

¹⁰ S. Niditch ("The Wronged Woman Righted: An Analysis of Genesis 38," HTR 72 [1979] 143-49) has suggested that in ancient Israelite society "the young woman is allowed only two proper roles. She is either an unmarried virgin in her father's home or she is a faithful, child producing wife in her husband's or husband's family's home" (145). By denying Tamar the right to produce children -in the family, Judah made her a misfit in the social structure. By bearing Judah's children as the result of her deception, "Her position in society is regularized. She now becomes a true member of the patriarchal clan" (148).

¹¹ See Emerton, VT 29, 404-5 for references.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Ruth 4:19-20.

Genesis 38 also occurs in the context of the Joseph story, though as Westermann has noted, the chapter is not really an addition to the Joseph story, but rather "belong(s) to the conclusion of the Jacob story."¹⁴ Even so, the Judah-Tamar story does interrupt the Joseph story, and it must be interpreted in the context of that material. A literary function of Genesis 38 is immediately apparent; it increases tension in the Joseph story in much the same way that cliff-hanger endings in serials and soap operas increase suspense and generate interest. As Baldwin notes, "While the reader is in suspense to know how Joseph fared in Egypt, he is forced to attend to this review of Judah's private life."¹⁵ Von Rad says, "It is really effective for Joseph to disappear from the reader completely for a time just as he disappeared from the father and the brothers."¹⁶

Commentators have long recognized that the doctrine of retribution is set in clear relief by the juxtaposition of Genesis 37 and 38. In Gen 37:26-27 Judah suggests selling Joseph to the Ishmaelite/Midianite traders,¹⁷ and while it is not explicitly stated, it seems likely that he was significantly involved¹⁸ in the plan to slay a male goat in 37:31, dip Joseph's tunic in the blood and present that "evidence" to Jacob for him to recognize in 37:32, and draw his own conclusions about what happened to Joseph. Judah is thus instrumental in depriving Jacob of a child and deceiving him with evidence. In chapter 38 Judah loses two sons and, as Alter¹⁹ notes, the deceiver himself is deceived by the evidence he gave in pledge for the kid in 38:17. According to the Midrash, "God said to Judah, 'You deceived your father with a kid. By your life, Tamar will deceive you with a kid.'... God said to Judah, 'You said to your father, "Please recognize." By your life Tamar will say to you, "Please recognize."'"²⁰

¹⁴ Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 22.

¹⁵ J. G. Baldwin, *The Message of Genesis 12-50* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986) 162-63.

¹⁶ G. von Rad, *Genesis* (Old Testament Library; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972) 357.

¹⁷ As a result of Judah's suggestion Joseph's life is spared (v 27), but the text does not present Judah in a totally positive light in this. His comment in v 26, "What profit is it for us to kill our brother?" uses a word for profit (בצע) that has quite negative connotations, "illicit gain."

¹⁸ At the very least, Judah joined with the others as they slaughtered the goat. Given Judah's leadership role in suggesting that they sell him, it seems likely that he was significantly involved in this part of the scheme as well.

¹⁹ R Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic, 1981) 11. While the terms male goat (שעיר עזים) in 37:31 and kid (גדי עזים) in 38:17, 20 are not identical, both the wording and meaning are sufficiently similar to establish the literary connection.

²⁰ Gen. Rab. 84:11-12 as cited by Alter, *ibid*. As was indicated in the previous note, the Hebrew terms for "male goat" in 37:31 and "kid" in 38:17, 20 are similar but not identical. The Hebrew expression (הכר נא) translated "please recognize" in the citation from the midrash is identical in Gen 37:31 and 38:25.

By setting the Judah-Tamar story in the context of the Joseph story, a deliberate contrast seems to have been made between Judah's conduct toward Tamar, who may have been a Canaanite,²¹ and the conduct of Joseph with another foreign woman, Potiphar's wife. There is no real basis for evaluating Judah's marriage to a Canaanite woman and his subsequent behavior toward Tamar in either the Judah-Tamar story or the Joseph story, and the implications of this contrast between the two brothers are not clear apart from the broader context of the patriarchal narrative.

It has also been suggested that the incident reported in Genesis 38 represents a turning point in the life of Judah.²² He appears in a very negative light when he suggests the sale of Joseph,²³ as he does in chapter 38 in his dealings with Tamar, in his relationship to the Canaanites (see below), and perhaps to the rest of his family as well. Judah's guilt in refusing to give Tamar to his youngest son is clear from his confession in 38:26 ("She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah"). Throughout the rest of the Joseph story, Judah appears as the leader of the brothers,²⁴ and while Baldwin's description of him as "sensitive and self-forgetful"²⁵ is perhaps overly positive, he does appear to have changed. In 44:18-34 he intercedes for Benjamin before Joseph when he could easily have justified abandoning Benjamin in an Egyptian jail²⁶ since he assumed

²¹ Certainly the daughter of Shua, whom Judah married, was a Canaanite woman. While the text does not indicate the national origin of Tamar, as Emerton points out (VT 26 [1976] 90), "most commentators believe that Tamar was thought by J to be a Canaanite. ...The obvious implication is that Tamar was a Canaanite." J. Sailhamer (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers* [The Expositor's Bible Commentary; 12 vols.; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990], 2.232) argues that if Tamar had been a Canaanite it would likely have been mentioned. He suggests that "through Tamar's clever plan, then, the seed of Abraham was preserved by not being allowed to continue through the sons of the Canaanite. . . . The line was continued through Judah and Tamar." The force of this suggestion is reduced by the fact that at other points in the Davidic Messianic line there are foreign women such as Rahab and Ruth.

²² E.g., A Berlin (*Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* [Sheffield: Almond, 1983] 40) says that Judah "seems to undergo a transformation in Gen. 38 and from that point on is different from the way he appeared in Gen. 37." See also Baldwin, 163.

²³ Goldin (JBL 96, 40-43) suggests that Judah may well have deliberately thwarted Reuben's plan to rescue Joseph (which was perhaps Reuben's attempt to get back in his father's good graces) in order to protect the position of family leadership that had come to him essentially by default as the result of his three older brothers' misdeeds (see, e.g., Gen 49:3-7).

²⁴ Goldin (JBL 96, 43) argues that Genesis 38 is part of the theme of leadership in Jacob's family, and it may well be that a change in Judah's character contributes to that theme. Goldin maintains that chapter 38 is an important part of the vita of the one chosen to lead the family.

²⁵ Baldwin, 163.

that the boy had actually stolen the prime minister's cup and thus deserved the punishment he got. This suggests that Judah is a different person than the one who 20 years earlier sold his little brother as a slave because of jealousy and irritation over Joseph's dreams and his favored status with Jacob and over the negative reports that Joseph brought Jacob about the brothers.

Genesis 38 also occurs in the context of the Jacob story,²⁷ and is similar to other narratives about Jacob's children (e.g., Genesis 34; 35:22-23). As was noted above, the material may have been placed here because of the general chronology of the events. Judah was with his brothers in the Hebron Valley in chapter 37, and he and his wife and children went into Egypt with the rest of Jacob's family before the end of the Joseph story. As Goldin has made clear, however, a major theme of both the Jacob and Joseph stories is the question of who will be the leader of Jacob's family, and the narrative contains several examples that illustrate that the usual principle of primogeniture was not the exclusive prerogative for leadership. At times this was determined by the sovereign choice of God (e.g., the choice of Jacob before the twins were born [Gen 25:23]); in other instances the normal right was forfeited because of grossly improper behavior (e.g., Reuben,²⁸ Simeon, and Levi).²⁹ Judah's leadership is affirmed despite the fact that he was not the first born-or the second or even the third born-and despite Jacob's preference for Joseph. God's providence is evident in this even though human factors such as the brothers' irresponsible behavior play a role as well. The possibility that chapter 38 recounts an event that began a transformation in Judah's character may contribute to this theme also.³⁰

Finally, the Judah-Tamar story is set in the context of the entire patriarchal narrative, and this context also provides significant clues to its meaning. It is well known that the promise made by God to

that he had made with his father is an important consideration in evaluating Judah's action as well.

²⁷ See above, n. 14.

²⁸ Goldin, 37-38, makes the interesting suggestion that Reuben's sexual intercourse with his father's concubine was not the cause of his losing the birthright but the result of his perception that he would be unjustly passed over in favor of Jacob's favorite, Joseph. Since possession of the father's concubines apparently signified mastery and authority over him, Reuben tried to take matters into his own hands.

²⁹ See Gen 49:3-7. Actually in the case of Jacob and Esau elements of both sovereign choice and irresponsible human behavior can be seen. Alongside the pre-birth oracle declaring Jacob's rule over his brother, Esau's disregard for the promise and its spiritual dimensions seems to have contributed significantly to his loss of the rights of the firstborn.

³⁰ See above and nn. 21-25.

Abraham in Gen 12:1-3³¹ dominates the entire patriarchal narrative. The provisions of that promise included an heir for Abraham (and for his descendants as well), the land, and the assurance that the descendants of Abraham would become a great nation that would bless all the families of the earth. The stories of the patriarchs revolve around that promise and the various obstacles to its fulfillment encountered by the patriarchs. Abraham responded to God's call and went to Canaan where he was immediately confronted with a major obstacle to possessing the land--"Now the Canaanite was then in the land" (Gen 12:6). Then came a famine in the land that threatened his family's survival in Canaan. This obstacle drove them out of the land and into Egypt where Abraham's deceit landed Sarah in Pharaoh's harem--a rather significant threat to the fulfillment of the promise--and she had to be extricated by God. The promise was threatened by Sarah's barrenness, by the command to sacrifice Isaac, by Isaac's not being married at age 40, and then by Rebekah's barrenness. Jacob's forced exile from the promised land³² threatened the fulfillment, and the obstacles did not end with Jacob's return from Aram.

For Abraham and Isaac the threats to the promise seem to focus primarily on the heir; in the case of Jacob they shift primarily to that part of the promise involving the land. As the promise theme continues to unfold in the Jacob story, a theme introduced earlier is developed in a way that is relevant for understanding Genesis 38. As was noted above, it is difficult to evaluate Judah's marriage to a Canaanite woman on the basis of either Genesis 38 or the Joseph story. The Jacob story taken together with the broader patriarchal narrative does provide a basis for such a judgment. As Abraham was about to send his servant to Aram to find a wife for Isaac, he made the servant formally swear that he would not take a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites (Gen 24:4). This same anti-Canaanite perspective is evident in 26:34-35 where Isaac and Rebekah's displeasure over Esau's marriage to two Canaanite women (see also 28:8-9) is emphasized. Genesis 34 from the Jacob story suggests one reason for this perspective.

Genesis 34 relates an incident in which a Canaanite named Shechem had sexual relations with Jacob's daughter Dinah and

³¹ E.g., in response to the question of where the impetus for the thematic development throughout the Pentateuch comes, D. J. A. Clines (*The Theme of the Pentateuch* [Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1978] 26) says, "There can be little doubt that the answer must be: the promise to the patriarchs, with its various elements, and in its various formulations." For a detailed study of this subject see C. Westermann, *The Promises to the Fathers* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980; see also W. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978) 84-99.

³² On this see E. Curtis, "Structure, Style and Context as a Key to Interpreting Jacob's Encounter at Peniel," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 30 (1987) of 129-37, esp. 135-37.

approached her family requesting permission to marry her. In his negotiations with Jacob, Hamor, Shechem's father and the Canaanite leader, described the advantage that such an arrangement would have for the family of Jacob: "Intermarry with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. Thus you shall live with us, and the land shall be open before you; live and trade in it, and acquire property in it" (Gen 34:9-10). When the sons of Jacob imposed circumcision as the condition for the marriage, Shechem explained to his fellow citizens why they should submit to this and afterward said, "Only on this condition will the men consent to live with us, to become one people" (34:22). What was viewed by the Canaanites as a significant advantage (becoming one people), was viewed by the biblical authors as a significant threat to Israel's existence, and this perspective provides a basis for judging Judah's behavior in Genesis 38. The story of Dinah in Genesis 34 shows that the Canaanites living in the land constituted a major threat to the promise in that assimilation with the Canaanites would make it impossible for Abraham's descendants ever to become a great nation as Gen 12:3 predicts.

Judah's departure from his brothers and his settling among the Canaanites represented a threat to the family in that it would be more difficult to maintain the family's distinctive Yahwistic values in isolation from the other family members. Settling among the Canaanites and intermarrying with them posed the significant risk of being assimilated with them (ie., becoming one people).³³ It is likely that Judah's evil sons reflect the values they learned from their father and constitute evidence for Judah's departure from the values deemed proper by the biblical author. It is possible that the repetition of the verb **וָלַח**, "he turned aside" in 38:1, "he turned aside to a man, an Adulterite, whose name was Hirah"; and 38:16, "he turned aside to her [ie., the prostitute] by the road" is meant to suggest that Judah was committing fornication in both instances (first spiritually and then physically), an even closer parallel if Tamar was a Canaanite. Hirah,

³³ This theme continues into the Book of Judges. As Block ("The Period of the Judges: Religious Disintegration Under Tribal Rule," in *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration: Essays in Honor of Roland K Harrison* ed. A Gileadi; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1988] 48) has suggested, literary indicators make it clear that the editor of the Book of Judges is making the point that --the spiritual condition of the people inhabiting the land of Canaan at the end of the settlement period is the same as it had been at the beginning. It has made no difference that the identity of the people has changed. ...He has exposed the total Canaanization of Israelite society." Thus the threat anticipated in Genesis proves to be fully legitimate. The close parallels between the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 and the story of the Levite and his concubine in Judges 19 makes it clear that interaction with the Canaanites has resulted in assimilation of their values to the point where the Benjaminites are little different from the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Judah's Canaanite friend, uses the term **זִמְדִּי**, "cult prostitute" (vv 21-22) for the woman with whom Judah had sexual relations while the narrator (v 15) uses the word **זֹנֶה**, "harlot, prostitute." Perhaps the Canaanite's use of a term replete with connotations of Canaanite fertility worship would remind the reader that cult prostitution constituted an important part of Canaanite worship.

Even as the story of Dinah and Shechem in chapter 34 implies the threat the Canaanites posed to the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, the Judah-Tamar story shows that Judah willingly contributed to the problem by his behavior.³⁴ As Ross points out, chapter 38 "present[s] a picture of a corrupt family. Judah continued his irresponsible course: he had earlier moved the sale of Joseph, then separated from his brothers and married a Canaanite, and now had seen the fruit of that marriage thoroughly evil."³⁵ He further notes, "If it had been left up to Judah, the family would have assimilated with Canaanites."³⁶ Aalders says that the events of chapter 38 "especially bring to light the critical danger that threatened the 'chosen seed' if they remained in Canaan. Mixed marriages with the Canaanites could only lead to the people of Israel losing their identity among the Canaanites and eventually being absorbed by them."³⁷

This suggests another important connection with the Joseph story although the verbal and literary connectors are not explicit ones. Genesis 38 shows that living in Canaan among its inhabitants jeopardized the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham because the sons of Jacob were unable and/or unwilling to resist assimilation with the Canaanites. The family of Judah, the leading spokesman for the brothers, and the one destined to become the leading tribe and father of the royal and messianic line, was threatened with extinction as a result of Judah's actions.

34 In strong contrast to Judah's behavior, Joseph is presented in chap. 39 as resisting the advances of a married foreign woman. It is true that Joseph does marry an Egyptian, and the daughter of a priestess at that. There are no indications in the text that this was viewed negatively and that this constituted a threat to the promise or the future of Abraham's descendants or to proper Yahwistic values. It is unclear whether it was the context (ie., Joseph was living in Egypt where he perhaps had few choices for a wife other than Egyptians. In addition, Pharaoh apparently arranged for the marriage) or if it was Joseph's character that caused the biblical author to view that marriage to a foreign woman as appropriate. Generally Egyptians were not viewed in the same overwhelmingly negative terms as Canaanites though at a later time Solomon's marriage to an Egyptian princess was viewed negatively and was seen as a major step that set Solomon on the course that led him to apostasy. ;

³⁵ A. P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1988) 616.

³⁶ Ibid. 619.

³⁷ G. C. Aalders, *Genesis* (Bible Student's Commentary; 2 vols.; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981) 2.191.

Joseph's time in Egypt and his elevation to a high position there did much to insure the survival of Jacob's family during the famine that affected the entire Near East, but there appears to be a significance that goes beyond the short term. Gen 43:26-34 describes a meal that Joseph ate with his brothers in Egypt before he revealed himself to them. Verse 32 explains that Joseph, the brothers, and the Egyptians ate separately. This was done, according to v 32, because "the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians." Likewise, Joseph's family was allowed to live in the area of Goshen, apparently apart from the areas where the Egyptians lived, because "every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians" (46:34). The situation in Egypt was very different from that in Canaan. In Egypt the problem posed by intermarriage and assimilation was far less significant, not because of the Israelites but rather because the Egyptians would not have anything to do with them. In Egypt the descendants of Abraham were protected from themselves because the Egyptians considered them to be an abomination. Thus Jacob's family was placed in a cultural environment where God's promise that they would become a great nation could be fulfilled.

As Aalders suggests, "Jacob's descendants had to leave Canaan if they were to develop as a separate and distinctive people. It was imperative that they be moved into a situation where they could not possibly mix with their countrymen. This, of course, happened in Egypt."³⁸ The necessity for the Egyptian sojourn in Israel's becoming a **גוי גדול** "a great nation," as predicted in Gen 12:2 is suggested by Joseph in 50:20, "You meant evil against me, but Cod meant it for good in order... to preserve many people alive [**לְהַחֲיֵת עַם רַב**]." While the same kind of direct verbal correspondence that often links passages and ideas is not found here, it seems likely that **עַם**, "people," and **גוי** "nation," are essentially synonymous here and that Joseph's statement is related to the situation found in Exodus 1. Exod 1:20 says, **וַיֵּרָב הָעַם** **וַיַּעֲצִמוּ מְאֹד**, "the people have become very numerous and strong," and this prompts the Pharaoh to do something about a situation he considers quite dangerous (e.g., Exod 1:7, 9, 12, 20). It seems likely that the statement in Exodus is meant to emphasize the fulfillment of the promise to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation.

Recognizing the various contexts in which the Judah-Tamar story is set is essential in understanding the significance of the events described in Genesis 38. The contexts complement one another, and each provides unique information that illuminates the purpose(s) of the story intended by the biblical author.

³⁸ Ibid.

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ARTICLE I.

**CREATION; OR, THE BIBLICAL COSMOGONY
IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN SCIENCE.¹**

BY JAMES D. DANA, LL.D., SILLIMAN PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY AND
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THE grand history of creation with which the Bible opens is thrown into the region of myths or dreams by two classes of writers: the scientific, who know the many positive scientific errors in the accepted interpretation, and see no method of harmonizing the two diverse records; the exegetical, who hold that exegesis alone should determine the meaning of the chapter.

One such short-sighted exegete, for example, referring to Professor Guyot's recent work, seeks to enforce his various objections by such remarks as the following: "Biblical interpretation is older far than geology"! "Skill and knowledge in the physical sciences by no means necessarily involve skill and knowledge in the science of interpretation." "A man may have considerable knowledge about terminal moraines, and little or no such knowledge about the origin, history, and diction of

¹ Creation ; or, the Biblical Cosmogony in the Light of Modern Science. By Arnold Guyot, LL.D., Blair Professor of Geology and Physical Geography in the College of New Jersey. pp. 140. 12mo. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1884.

[For Professor Dana's former statements of his views upon this subject, see articles by him in BIBLIOTHECA SACRA, vol. xiii. (1856) pp. 80-130, 631-655, and vol. xiv. (1857) pp. 338-413, 460-525, and 854-874.--EDS.]

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mogony, and that the brief review of the majestic march of events before man makes a wonderfully befitting prelude to God's message of law and love to man, constituting the Bible.

I do not mean to say that Professor Guyot's views as to the interpretation, or as to the meaning of the Hebrew words in which the oldest form of the document appears, are in every case beyond question. But I do claim for them the first place among all the interpretations that have been offered. It is now thirty-five years since Professor Guyot, two years after his arrival in America, gave me, at my house one evening, his views on the first chapter of Genesis. I listened to his interpretations of the successive verses with increasing interest to the end, and with increasing admiration and affection for the earnest, simple-minded, and learned Christian. Professor Guyot took up the subject after years of training in biblical as well as natural science, and pursued it with deep and honest, searchings for the truth, believing both in the Bible and in Nature, and in the inspiration and truth of the first chapter of the Bible.

For convenience of reference I here insert

THE COSMOGONY OF GENESIS.¹

CHAP. I.-¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

² And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters.

³ And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. ⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good : and God divided the light from the darkness.

⁵ And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, day first.

⁶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters: ⁷ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament : and it was so. ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, day second.

¹ The few variations from the Authorized Version have been made by Professor Wm. G. Ballantine.

⁹ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. ¹⁰ And God called the dry land Earth ; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas : and God saw that it was good. ¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass; the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth : and it was so. ¹² And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening and there was morning, day third.

¹⁴ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night ; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years : ¹⁵ and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth : and it was so. ¹⁶ And God made the two great lights ; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night : he made the stars also. ¹⁷ And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸ and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness : and God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was morning and there was evening, day fourth.

²⁰ And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and let fowl fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. ²¹ And God created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind : and God saw that it was good. ²² And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. ²³ And there was evening and there was morning, day fifth.

²⁴ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind : and it was so. ²⁵ And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind and God saw that it was good.

²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them. ²⁸ And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

²⁹ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed ; to you it shall be for meat. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb

for meat: and it was so. ³¹ And God saw every thin; that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, day the sixth.

CHAP. II.-¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made ; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. ³ And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

In the following pages I briefly review and explain Professor Guyot's interpretation, without following precisely the order in his work, adding in some parts other, thoughts of his from our many conversations, where they could aid in the illustration of the subject-thoughts which, with more leisure than was afforded him in the few last weeks of his life, he would probably have brought into his volume. Where we differ on any point I make mention of it. I have also here and there added an argument in support of his views.

I. In approaching the subject we have to recognize the fact that man's comprehension of any idea communicated by another is limited by the amount and character of his knowledge and beliefs, and that the interpretation of the terms employed in the communication would be determined thereby. For example, the idea of space about the earth would necessarily take shape in the mind as that of a solid firmament with men who never had any other idea on the subject, even if the author imparting the idea were divine. The idea of fluid in space, whether liquid or gaseous, would become that of waters to those who already believed in the "waters above the heavens." (See 148th Psalm, from which Professor Guyot makes a citation. The general expression "plants means to ordinary men ordinary plants, such as are everywhere in view; and only to one, educated in science or philosophy are the essential attributes of a plant present in the simplest of the species. Accordingly, the terms or words by which the ideas in the Bible cosmogony are expressed must necessarily, although these ideas were divinely com-

municated, bear some impress of want of knowledge or comprehension. This important psychological fact is not referred to by Professor Guyot. My attention was drawn to it nearly thirty years since by the eminent theologian of New England, Dr. Nathaniel W. Taylor.

I suppose it to be far from certain that Moses was the inspired man who received from God the record of his creative works. It seems probable that the record was a chapter of sacred truth among men long before his time, and that it was the source of the early monotheism of the world, and of some of the cosmogonic ideas associated with this belief.

II. The brief review of creation in Genesis sets forth only the grand stages of progress in the creative work, or those great events that marked epochs in the history. Such it should have been if written by a man of supreme intelligence and exalted philosophy, and such it must be if God is the author. The number of these epochs in the account is eight. A method of interpretation that puts among the eight an event not of this epochal character should, therefore, be received with doubt.

III. System under law pervades God's works, and the discovery of it is one great end of all philosophic study of nature. Professor Guyot looked for system in the arrangement of the Mosaic record, as well as in the relations of the works themselves; and the result he reached is in itself profound testimony to its divine origin.

Of the six days of Genesis, the first three are like the last three in having *light* as the work of the first of the three days, and in having *two* great works on the last of the three. There is, thus, a parallelism in movement between the two halves, or the first and second triads. On the first day, the light was the *light* of the universe, dependent on the constitution of matter; on the fourth day, the first of the second triad, it is *light* from the sun, moon, and stars to the earth.

Further: the first triad included the events connected

with the *inorganic* history of the earth, the last of which, on the third day, was the arrangement of the lands and seas; the second triad was occupied with the events of the organic history, from the creation of the first animals to man.

Further: the third day, or last of the first triad, ends with the creation of plants, as its second great work, or the introduction of the new element, life, which was to be the chief feature of the progress during the succeeding era; and on the sixth day, the last of the second triad, the second great work is the creation of *man*, a being made "in the image of God," and destined through his spiritual nature to immortal progress.

This system in the divine record is not a figment of the student's fancy. It is a fact; a fact that displays purpose in the author of the document, and knowledge beyond that of ancient or any time, and philosophy more than human.

IV. The first verse of the chapter, besides proclaiming God the creator of the "heavens and the earth," teaches that the beginning of the heavens and the earth was the beginning of the existing universe. The words imply that the heavens and the earth began to exist in some state or condition; which condition, as regards the earth, was one waste and void," or, as another translator writes it "formless and naught."

The actual condition is partly indicated by the work of the first day, "Let light be, and light was." The light was the first light of the universe. The phenomena of light have been proved to be a result of molecular action, and to be dependent upon fundamental qualities of matter as now constituted. Man has ascertained the wave-lengths in the vibration of molecular force corresponding to light of different parts of the spectrum, and also other laws of light. He has found, moreover, that the laws of heat and of electrical and chemical action are so involved with those of light that all these conditions are convertible and

one in molecular origin. The fiat "Let light be" was, consequently, the beginning of light, heat, and electrical and chemical action in matter, which matter till then was inert; the beginning of laws of action which have since remained unchanged; the beginning of the activity which led to chemical combinations, and later to systems of worlds, to suns and to planets; the beginning, therefore, of "the Generations of the Heavens," or of the development of the universe.

The physical facts with regard to light--which, it should be noted, are not modern facts, but as old as the first creative day thus prove to us that the "waters," upon the face of which the Spirit of God moved when the fiat of the first day went forth, were not literally waters, whatever the strict meaning of the Hebrew word; nor was "the earth" a defined sphere in space.

V. The word day in the chapter, with the accompanying expression, *evening and morning*, is a stumbling-block to many. The ordinary exegete finds only 24-hour days, and stands to it that the earth in its revolution was the timepiece then in use. Professor Guyot concludes from the five: different uses of the word "day" in the narrative, and the fact that it is employed for three days before there was a sun to divide the day from the night (an argument which others have used), that the earth's day of twenty-four hours may not be, and cannot be, the day of Genesis ; and, hence, that the days were unlimited periods --time of whatever length the work in each case required; and that the expression "evening and morning" indicates, by a familiar metaphor, the beginning and consummation of each work. If, as is now clear, the Genesis is an account of the creation of the universe, days of twenty-four hours, measured off by the revolving earth, can have no place, in the history. Moreover, it is hardly possible that Moses, who wrote, "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past," and, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst

formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God," entertained so belittling an idea of the Creator and his work. Before the first day there was no literal evening; there was darkness; and then, as the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, at the fiat, there was light. The succession was "evening and morning," a beginning and a consummation of the great work.

VI. *The dividing of the waters from the waters by a firmament* is the recorded work of the *second* day. The beginning of activity in matter took place on the first or preceding clay; the appearance over the earth of dry land amid the gathered waters was to be the work of the third or following day. The historical event of chief importance between the two was the making of the earth.

This division of the "waters from the waters" has usually been interpreted as a separation, by an expanse or firmament, of waters of the earth's surface from the waters, that is, the clouds, above; or, of the earth's molten surface from the clouds. Such an event is too trivial for a place among the eight great works, and also is out of place on the second day. It accomplished nothing, for it left the earth under its swaddling-band of clouds. The events of the first and third days help us to understand that of the second or intervening day.

On the first day, matter was endowed with force: The next great event was the making of the universe thus begun; it was the dividing-up of this now active matter, diffused through the immensity of space; the subdividing and arranging of it, until the system of the universe had been developed, and ultimately the earth had become a defined sphere, with the "heavens of heavens," or a great expanse, around it. The words describe sufficiently well such a division of the "waters from the waters"; or, perhaps, more strictly, the final result, the earth separated from the diffused matter of space in which, on the first clay, it was still involved. By the fiat, the rotation of matter in

space was begun (if this was not part of the work of the first clay), and the system of the universe was carried forward. The earth, though thus defined, was still an unfinished earth.

It matters little what may be the literal meaning of the word translated "firmament." Although regarded generally among the Jews as signifying a solid firmament, it is far from certain that Moses, who was versed in all Egyptian learning, so considered it.¹ Professor Guyot quotes from verse twentieth of the narrative the expression, "fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament," as evidence on this point.

VII. The gathering together of the waters into one place, called seas, and, thereby, the appearing of the dry land, was the work of the *first half of the third day*. After the defining of the earth in the solar system--at first, no doubt, a liquid sphere--slow cooling and consolidation went on and, finally, the condensation of the larger part of the enveloping vapors took place, covering the sphere with water. Still later, the waters were gathered into one place and the dry land appeared, thus determining the arrangements of the surface, and making the sphere ready for living species. With this finishing event the inorganic history of the the earth was brought to an end.

Geological readings reach back to this period of the first dry land--that of the so-called Archaean era, the geography of which era is now pretty well understood. Of the earth in its molten state the science has no facts from observed rocks, and derives its conclusions and conjectures mostly from facts and general principles in chemical and physical science.

VIII. The second fiat of the third day commences with the words, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb

Professor Guyot places the actual defining of the earth under the work of the third day, instead of with that of the second day, as above. The order and character of the events are the same in the two methods of arrangement.

yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit." In the expressions, "yielding seed," "having seed in itself," the words describe, with wonderful precision, as Professor Guyot observes, the characteristic of a living species, distinguishing it from mineral or inorganic substances. Beings having powers of growth and reproduction were now facts, and this was the great creation. These powers are exhibited in the simplest plants; and hence the new creation was in an important sense complete, although represented at first only by the lower tribes of plants. Obedience to the fiat, "Let the earth bring forth," continued in after time; new and higher species coming forth in succession, and ordinary fruit-trees not until the later part of geological time, long after the Coal period..

With reference to the introduction of life, science has no explanation; for no experiments have resulted, in making from dead matter a living species. We can only say, "God created." The growing plant is on a higher level than that of ordinary molecular law; for it controls and subordinates to itself chemical forces, and thereby is enabled to make out of mineral matter chemical compounds and living structures which the forces without this control are incapable of. Only when growth ceases, and death consequently ensues, does ordinary chemical law regain control, and then decomposition commences. More than this, the living being, before it dies, produces germs which develop into other like forms, with like powers; and thus cycles of growth are continued indefinitely. In making its tissues, the living plant is storing force for the sustenance and purposes of beings of a still higher grade --those of the animal kingdom ; beings that cannot live on mineral materials. There is, hence, reason for believing that the power which so controls and exalts chemical forces, raising them to the level required by the functions of a plant, cannot come from unaided chemical forces; and much less that which carries them to a still higher level, --that of the living, sentient animal.

In the Bible record, the creation of plants preceded that of animals; and this order is sustained by facts from nature. For the reason just stated, the plant, as Guyot says, "is the indispensable basis of all animal life." Further, the lower species of plants are capable of existing in waters hotter than animals can endure; and, therefore, the condition of the waters of the globe would have suited them very long before they were fitted for animal life; very long, because diminution in temperature must have gone on with extreme slowness.

Professor Guyot observes, further, that, since vegetation uses the animal-destroying gas, carbonic acid, as a means of growth, it served to purify the ancient waters and air, and, hence, was a befitting part of the inorganic division of the history. He also well says that the living principle fundamental to the plant was prophetic of a higher organic, era beyond, that of animal life.

Distinct remains of plants have not yet been found in Archaean rocks. These rocks have been so changed by heat that relics of plants would have been obliterated or obscured, had they existed. Some of the rocks contain great quantities of graphite, or black lead, a variety of carbon that in some cases (as in Carboniferous slates in Rhode Island, and at Worcester, Mass.) has resulted from the action of heat on coal beds. The graphite which is common in the Archaean rocks of Canada is regarded by many as evidence that Archaean time had marine plants in great abundance.

IX. On the *fourth day*, "God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven." In a subsequent sentence, the words are: "made the two great lights," "the stars also." But the purpose of the lights is set forth in detail in each of the five verses relating to the day's work: "to divide the day from the night"; to be "for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years"; "to give light upon the earth"; to rule over the day, and over the night "; "to divide the light from the darkness"; "the greater light

to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night." The great purpose of the sources of light was, therefore, accomplished by them, whether they were "made" or made to appear. It was fully accomplished when the sun became to the earth the actual source of day and night and seasons, and that would have been when it first shone through the earth's long-existing envelope of clouds. Professor Guyot speaks of this envelope as consisting of electrically lighted vapor, and calls it a photosphere, resembling, in some respects, that now about the sun; and he observes that the sun, moon, and stars became visible only after its disappearance. The modern "Aurora" is a result of electric disturbances over the present cold sphere; and there can be no doubt of the vastly greater intensity of such disturbances during the period of the earth's cooling. But, whatever the fact as to the electric light about the earth when the temperature had greatly diminished, there is no doubt that the envelope of clouds was of long continuance, and that the time was slowly but finally reached when the earth was free from it. One of the sublimest passages in literature is the reference to the work of the third day in creation, contained in God's answer to Job "out of the whirlwind " (chapter xxxviii.); and, although often quoted, it may well be introduced here: "Who shut up the sea with doors?" "When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it, and established my decree upon it, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." The final disappearance of that swaddling-band would necessarily have resulted in the events of the fourth day.

This first appearance of the sun naturally comes after the creation of plants; for the cloud envelope would have continued long after the earth's temperature had diminished to that degree which admitted of the growth of the lower plants. And, besides, it is a natural prelude

to the organic era, the sun's light being essential to all higher grades of animal species; though not to the lower.

X. *The fiat of the fifth day reads:* "Let the waters bring forth abundantly." The words which follow describe the lower orders of animals, or the Invertebrates, together with all Vertebrates excepting Mammals (or quadrupeds and man). *The fiat of the first half of the sixth day* begins with "Let the earth bring forth," and the words that follow describe the Mammals, the division of Vertebrates of which Man is the head.

The succession in the living tribes given in the chapter is: (i.) Plants (third day); (2.) Invertebrates and the lower Vertebrates (fifth day); (3.) Mammals, or the higher Vertebrates (first half of the sixth day) ; (4.) Man, the head of Mammals (second half of the sixth day). This course of progress accords in a general way with the readings of science, and the accordance is exact with the succession made out for the earliest species of these grand divisions, if we except the division of birds about which there is doubt. Geology has ascertained many details with regard to the earth's life and the upward gradations in the various tribes. But the grand fact of progress, and the general order in the succession, were first announced in the Cosmogony of the Bible:

Science might say that the principles of zoological classification would have been conformed to more closely if the work of the fifth day had ended with the Invertebrates, leaving all the Vertebrates to the sixth day. But this arrangement, viewed in the light of the philosophy of history, is no improvement; since the record, like the rest of the Bible, has special reference to Man, in whom is the consummation of all history. The sixth day's work includes only that particular division of Vertebrates, to which Man himself belongs, whose common characteristic, that of suckling their young, is, through the feelings of subjection, reverence and affection it occasions, of the highest value as a means of binding child to parent, man to man, and man to his Maker.

XI. The various species mentioned as the work of the fifth day, and again those of the sixth day, came forth not as a motley assemblage simultaneously at the word of command, but, as already remarked, in long succession. Guyot, like his friend Agassiz, saw in the facts connected with this long succession, and in those exhibited by living species, evidence of a development, or gradual unfolding, of the kingdoms of life. He found this evidence in the general rise in grade of species from the simple beginnings of early time to the crowning species, Man. He found it, further, in the many examples of two or three lines of species divaricating off from so-called comprehensive or composite types, like the forkings from a single stem. Agassiz called the types at the head or source of such forkings synthetic types; and Guyot (Objecting to the term "synthetic " because it implies a putting together of what was previously separate) denominated them undivided types, or types that were to be divided in the course of future progress. He found, following his friend, still more striking evidence of development in Agassiz's discovery that a very close parallelism existed, in numerous cases through all departments of living species, between the successive kinds of life in the geological series and the successive forms in the stages of development of single living species, so that the successive adult forms of the young (or early) world were like the successive young forms in the development of a living species. For example, in Crustaceans, or the group to which the Crab, Lobster, and Shrimp belong, the species of early time are very much like the younger stages of some of these modern species. Thus there was a degree of parallelism between the development of the long succession of species and development from the germ of a single high grade species of later time. No principle worked out by his studies called forth from Agassiz greater enthusiasm and eloquence than this last; and none led him so positively to the belief that, in his searchings and discoveries of law and system in nature, he was studying "the

thoughts of God," or, in the words of Guyot, "the will or purpose of God." The principle is now universally recognized among biologists, and has become a means of reading the past. To the ordinary eye the coiled shell of a Nautilus or Ammonite is a shell more or less smooth and pretty, large or small. To one who has learned to read nature, as has been pointed out by Flyatt, it is an historical roll: the inner coil, simple in form, being the shell of the youngest stage in its development; the successive coils, of varying form and adornment, that of the successive stages, one after another, toward the adult stage. And, further, the first stage reveals much as to the early forms in the geological history of the type, and the following, of later forms in the chronological succession. This is an example under the principle of parallelism between the stages of embryonic development and the stages in the earth's life-development.

To the minds of Agassiz and Guyot, thus taught by nature and to that also of the writer,--the hand of God did not appear to be lifted from his works by such truths. They held that the development was carried forward by the Creator, and, looked upon each successive species as existing by his creating act. God was not only at the head as the source of power, but also in every movement, and *creatively* in each new step of progress. And how much more God-like is such a system of development than the making of the fifth-day motley assemblage of life at the spoken word!

The very words in the first chapter of Genesis, as Guyot observes, sustain this interpretation. Nowhere is there taught that abrupt creation of species which prejudging exegesis so generally finds. The narrative reads, with reference to plants, "Let the earth bring forth"; not let certain kinds, or all kinds, of plants exist; but "Let the earth bring forth"; and the creation begun in the fiat on the third day was continued on afterward, through the earth's period of growth and development. So, again,

with regard to the lower animals, with fishes, reptiles, and flying things, it says "Let the waters bring forth," instituting thus a course of development, and not fixing its limits; and conforming in the command "Let the waters" to the geological fact that the earliest animal species were all of the waters, and a great part of those that followed these throughout Paleozoic time. Further, on the sixth day, it reads, "Let the earth bring forth," although the species were of the highest class of the animal kingdom, --that of Mammals.

Gradual development is thus the doctrine of the chapter, as it is of nature. Modern science teaches what the Bible, in its opening chapter on cosmogony, first taught. Agassiz believed it; and still he was, to the end of his life, a believer, also, in the creation of each species by a divine act.

X11. Does the chapter on cosmogony in the Bible teach *the direct creation of each species by a divine act*? We look in vain for any definite statement on this important subject in connection with the works of the third, fifth, or sixth days, with the exception of the work of the latter half of the sixth day, the creation of Man. The expressions "Let the waters bring forth," "Let the earth bring forth," and the following expression, "God made," do not imply that a divine act was required for each species they teach definitely that, man excepted, only three fiat were required for all the various and immensely numerous species that have existed in past time. And in this feature the first chapter of Genesis is like the rest of the Bible.

The question is thus left an open one, to be decided, if decided at all, by the study of existing life and that of the past. Considering, then that the fact is not decided by the Bible, and in view of the readings of nature that have been made of late years by many investigators, Professor Guyot admits in his recent work that the question remains open. He observes that the use of the Hebrew

word *bara*, translated *created*, on three occasions, and three only, in the chapter,--the first at the creation of matter, the second at the creation of animal life, and the third at the creation of Man,--teaches that these events were distinct creations, that is, demanded divine intervention; and that evolution from matter into life, froth animal life into the spiritual life of man, is impossible ; but adds with reference to the rest of the work of creation, "the question of evolution of matter into various forms of matter; of life, into the various forms of life, and of mankind into all its varieties, remains still open."

This was not the early view of Professor Guyot nor that of the writer. It was slowly reached by us both and only after an accumulation of facts by science--with regard to the wide varieties of existing species, the relations of varieties to physical conditions over the globe and the consequent gradations of forms, and the gradations of existing species in some cases into those of the preceding geological age, together with other paleontological discoveries--had made the argument: for the development or unfolding of the systems of life, before held, an argument for development through some natural method under "the constant and indispensable supervision of God over the work." We both hold that this natural method is at present only very imperfectly understood, and' may always be so.

The idea of gradual development pervades the Mosaic narrative from beginning to end. The creation of light is not the creation of an elemental substance or property, but the imparting of forces to the particles of matter and thus initiating change and progress. The dividing of the "waters from the waters" was not the creation of any particular substance or condition, but the carrying forward of the development of the universe by movements of rotation and systems of divisions and combinations, under the law of gravitation and other molecular laws, until suns and worlds had been evolved, and, among

the worlds, the Earth. The gathering of the waters into one place and the appearing of the dry land was not the sudden creation of dry land, but a further carrying on of changes until the molten earth had become covered with the condensed waters, and had at last its seas and continents: not its finished continents, for the fiat is simply a beginning of work that was to be completed, as in other cases, in future ages.

Thus the inorganic history in the narrative is like the organic. If Professor Guyot accepts of the nebular theory in his system it is because the early part of the chapter not only is unintelligible without it, but actually teaches it. Thus science explains and illumines the inspired narrative, and exalts our conceptions of the grand events announced. Thus, also, the sacred record manifests its divine origin in its concordance with the latest readings of nature.

XIII. Of the last work, the sacred record says, "God created Man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Three times this strong affirmation is repeated in the announcement, and three times "the potent word" *bara* is used. Man's commission, as sent forth, was "subdue" "and have dominion," in which all nature was placed at his feet; and being made in the image of God, he was capable of moral distinctions and of spiritual progress. He was thus above nature, while of nature. "With him begins the age of moral freedom and responsibility, that of the historical world."

Science has made no real progress toward proving that the divine act was not required for the creation of Man. No remains of ancient man have been found that are of lower grade than the lowest of existing tribes; none that show any less of the erect posture and of other characteristics of the exalted species.

XIV. The words closing the verses on the sixth day are; "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." The chapter opens with the words,

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth; "and this verse announces the finishing of "the heavens and the earth," a comprehensive expression which throws light on the meaning of the first announcement and of those which follow it.

XV. "Now begins the seventh day, the day of rest, or the sabbath of the earth"--the day now in progress which has not yet reached its evening, in which God's "work is one of love to man, the redemption;" the creation of " the new man, born anew of the Spirit, in the heart of the natural man."

Parallel with the week of Creation, Man, a being of a few short years, has his week; and, by God's appointment, as well as Nature's need, his seventh day of rest--"of rest" from daily toil, but of activity in the higher world of the spirit."

"Such is the grand cosmogonic week described by Moses," says Guyot in his concluding remarks. I have found, as years have passed since that conversation in august, 1850, no reason to change my estimate of Professor Guyot's exposition of Genesis, unless it be that I give it, with small exceptions, fuller concurrence, and find higher satisfaction in its teachings. Every feature in it, its spirit, its philosophy, its sufficiency as an interpretation of the sacred text, its consistency with the demands of sciences commends it.

The appeal to nature-science which has here been made in order to sustain an interpretation of a chapter in the Bible will be to the scientific exegete--or rather to some such--another profane effort, though "of pious intent," to set aside the claims of the science of hermeneutics," calling for another "warning of the readers of this noble little volume"--to which will now be added "the excellent BIBLIOTHECA SACRA." But this way of warning the world against the mistakes of science, without knowing the difference between its truths and errors, is an unrighteous course. It is unrighteous, because its

charges are ignorantly made; and also because what there is of truth in science is truth from., a divine source, as strictly so as that of the Bible; and, thirdly, because it does harm to the cause of truth and not good.

To aid the reader in studying up science enough to make himself a judge of the scientific facts fundamental to the interpretations, I here give a, brief review of these facts.

I. For the law as to the basis of light, see any text-book on Physics. The existence of the ether in space is a fact now experimentally established. Not only have the wave-lengths for the different parts of the spectrum been determined with great accuracy, but also octaves in the wave-lengths corresponding to octaves in sound-vibrations; for, although the luminous part of the solar spectrum embraces a little less than one octave, the spectrum has been studied for about four octaves beyond the red end, and one beyond the violet.

2. The melted condition of the earth when first a sphere in space is not doubted by geologists, all geological and astronomical facts favoring the conclusion.

3. The temperature at the earth's surface when molten was above 2,000° Fahrenheit, as proved by the fusing temperature of rocks. As a consequence, the ocean's waters, equivalent in volume to a layer of water 1,000 feet deep over the whole earth's surface, were then in a state of dense vapor about the sphere; and so was all else of the surface material that was vaporizable at that temperature. Since a cubic inch of water makes, under ordinary pressure and temperature, a cubic foot of steam, the envelope of vapor, atmosphere, and other gases was of great thickness and density. The water-vapor began to condense at a temperature above the ordinary boiling point, because, as experiment has shown, this temperature varies with pressure; and under the heavy pressure of the superincumbent ocean of vapors and atmosphere, the temperature at which the ocean would have begun to be made from the deposition of water, would have been, according to one estimate, 600° Fahrenheit.

4. Rapid evaporation goes on not only at the boiling temperature, but also at temperatures much below it. While hot, the clouds must have made a continuous envelope about the sphere, which cooling would finally have broken up and removed.

5. Plants live on mineral matter, and animals not--a fact well established; and hence the animal kingdom is dependent on the vegetable kingdom for its existence.

6. Plants of the lower tribes survive in waters whose temperature is as high as 200° Fahrenheit, and some are not destroyed at a temperature of 220° Fahrenheit.

7. The question as to a genetic relation between the lowest animals and lowest plants is not yet positively decided by observation; for some biologists hold that the two kingdoms graduate into one another through intermediate species; and that although the lowest plants may have long preceded the lowest animals, the latter were a gradual development from the former. This is far from proved. The grand distinctive fact, that animals are self-conscious, or conscious of the outer world, know, avoid obstacles in locomotion, is strikingly true of the lower of the simple Rhizopods, which are species of the lowest division of the animal kingdom, as is well shown by Leidy. The claim is made only for the very lowest of this low group, which are yet doubtful things.¹

8. The first dry land of the globe appeared in what is called by geologists, The Archaean era. The position of the part over the American Continent is well known, and these positions indicate the form and location of the finished continent. Mountains existed over them, and among these oldest mountains of the oldest dry land are the Adirondacks, and the Highlands of New Jersey. The best part of the evidence with regard to the existence of plants in this era is stated on page 213. The existence of the lower of animal species during the later part of the era is yet unproved.

9. Aquatic invertebrate animals were, the earliest of animal species, according to the testimony from fossils in the earth's rocks. Fishes come next in order; then Amphibians; then Reptiles. All these tribes were represented by species before the earliest of Mammals appeared. The existence of Birds before the earliest Mammals is not proved, though believed by some paleontologists on probable evidence. The early Mammals were Marsupials (like the Opossum and Kangaroo) and lived in the era called by Agassiz "The Age of Reptiles." True Mammals came into geological history in the Tertiary era, very long after the appearance of the first Birds, and they so far characterize the era that Agassiz called it "The Age of Mammals."

Man was the last of the series. It is not established that his bones or relics occur as far back as the Tertiary era.

10. The facts with regard to system, development-like, in the order of succession in the plants and animals of geological history are not doubted by

¹ Dr. Leidy says, in his large, finely illustrated work on the Fresh-water Rhizopods of North America (2379), after alluding to the absence of a mouth and stomach: "Without trace of nerve elements and without definite fixed organs of any kinds internal or external, the Rhizopod--simplest of all animals, a mere jelly speck-moves about with the apparent purposes of more complex creatures. It selects and swallows its appropriate food, digests it and rejects the insoluble remains. It grows and reproduces its kind. It evolves a wonderful variety of distinctive forms, often of the utmost beauty; and indeed it altogether exhibits such marvelous attributes that one is led to ask the question, In what consists the superiority of animals usually regarded as much higher in the scale of life?"

any geologist or naturalist. Whether the development went forward without divine intervention for each species, in accordance with some theory of evolution, is a question about which there is disagreement.

No other facts from geology or the other nature-sciences are fundamental to the explanation, though all that are known may be used in its illustration. Geologists differ as to the present condition of the earth's interior; yet would not do this long if they could get down there for a look; the fact whether now liquid or not has nothing to do with the interpretation of Genesis. They differ as to theories of mountain-making.; but opinions on this point do not affect the interpretation. And so it is with other unsettled points in geology ; they have no fundamental bearing on the interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis.

Geologists vary much as to their views on this chapter; and some will take it literally, affirming that it is a mere fable, no better than other fables in ancient history. We would ask of all such (as well as of the nature-doubting exegete) a reconsideration of the question; and if they have doubts with regard to the authenticity of the Bible itself, they may perhaps be led, after a fair examination of the narrative, and a consideration of the coincidences between its history and the history of the earth derived from nature, to acknowledge a divine origin for both; and to recognize the fact that in this Introductory chapter its Divine author gives the fullest endorsement of the Book which is so prefaced. It is his own inscription on the Title Page.

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Bibliotheca Sacra 42 (1885) 201-24.

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THE THEOLOGY OF SEXUALITY IN THE BEGINNING: GENESIS 1-2

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The first two chapters of the Bible deal directly with the question of human sexuality. Not only is human sexuality presented as a basic fact of creation, but an elucidation of the nature of sexuality constitutes a central part of the Creation accounts. These opening chapters of Scripture, coupled with the portrayal of disruption and divine judgment presented in Gen 3, have been described as of seminal character and determinative for a biblical theology of sexuality. It has been correctly noted that a clear understanding of these basic statements is crucial, since here "the pattern is established and adjudged good. From then until the close of the biblical corpus it is the assumed norm."¹ In this article we will focus upon the theology of sexuality in the creation accounts (Gen 1-2), and in a subsequent article we will explore the theological insights on sexuality emerging from Gen 3.

1. *Sexuality in Genesis 1:1-2:4a*

In Gen 1:26-28 "the highpoint and goal has been reached toward which all of God's creativity from vs. 1 on was directed."² Here in lofty grandeur is portrayed the creation of man (*ha'adam* = "humankind"):

26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." 27 So

¹ Dennis F. Kinlaw, "A Biblical View of Homosexuality, in Gary R. Collins, ed., *The Secrets of Our Sexuality: Role Liberation for the Christian* (Waco, TX, 1976), p. 105.

² Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary, Old Testament Library* (Philadelphia, 1961), p. 57.

God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."³

It has been rightly observed that discussion among theologians over this passage has largely focused on the meaning of man's creation in the "image of God" and has almost entirely ignored the further affirmation that humankind is created male and female.⁴ In harmony with the concerns of this study we must focus in particular upon the neglected statement--"male and female he created them"--without ignoring the question of the *imago Dei* and the wider context of the chapter. The fundamental insights into the theology of human sexuality which emerge from Gen 1:1-2:4a are here discussed under seven major subheadings.

Creation Order

In the clause concerning man's creation as male and female (Gen 1:27c) we note, first of all, that sexual differentiation is presented as a creation by God, and not part of the divine order itself. This emphasis upon the creation of sexual distinction appears to form a subtle but strong polemic against the "'divinisation' of sex"⁵ so common in the thought of Israel's neighbors.

Throughout the mythology of the ancient Near East, the sexual activities of the gods form a dominant motif.⁶ The fertility myth was of special importance, particularly in Mesopotamia and Palestine. In the fertility cults creation was often celebrated as resulting from the union of male and female deities: "Copulation and procreation were mythically regarded as a divine event. Consequently the religious atmosphere was as good as saturated with mythical sexual conceptions."⁷

³ All English renditions of Scripture herein are from the RSV.

⁴ Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female: A Study of Sexual Relationships from a Theological Point of View* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1975), p. 19.

⁵ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (New York, 1962), 1:27.

⁶ Raymond Collins, "The Bible and Sexuality," *BTB* 7 (1977):149-151, conveniently summarizes the major aspects of sexuality (fertility, love-passion, destructive capacity, sacred marriage) in the ancient Near Eastern myths.

⁷ Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:27.

In contrast to this view of creation as divine procreation, the account of Gen 1, with its emphasis upon the transcendent God (*Elohim*) and a cosmic view of creation, posits a radical separation of sexuality and divinity. God stands "absolutely beyond the polarity of sex."⁸ The sexual distinctions are presented as a creation by God, not part of the divine order.

A Duality from the Beginning

Secondly, it may be noted that God created the bipolarity of the sexes from the beginning. The popular idea of an ideal androgynous being later split into two sexes cannot be sustained from the text. Gerhard von Rad correctly points out that "the plural in vs. 27 ('he created them') is intentionally contrasted with the singular ('him') and prevents one from assuming the creation of an originally androgynous man."⁹ The sexual distinction between male and female is fundamental to what it means to be human. To be human is to live as a sexual person. As Karl Barth expresses it, "We cannot say man without having to say male or female and also male and female. Man exists in this differentiation, in this duality."¹⁰ Whether or not we agree with Barth that "this is the only structural differentiation in which he [the human being] exists,"¹¹ the sexual distinction is certainly presented in Gen 1 as a basic component in the original creation of humankind.

Equality of the Sexes

A third insight into the theology of human sexuality stems from the equal pairing of male and female in parallel with *ha-'adam* in Gen 1:27. There is no hint of ontological or functional superiority or inferiority between male and female. Both are "equally immediate to the Creator and His act."¹² In the wider context of this passage, both are given the same dominion over the earth and other living creatures (vss. 26 and 28). Both are to share alike in the blessing and responsibility of procreation (vs. 28). In short, both participate equally in the image of God.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Von Rad, *Genesis*, p. 60.

¹⁰ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 3, 2 (Edinburgh, 1960):286.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Helmut Thielicke, *The Ethics of Sex* (New York, 1964), p. 7.

Wholeness

A fourth theological insight will serve to bridge our discussion from "male and female" to the *imago Dei*. In Gen 1:27 the generic term for humankind (*ha'adam*) includes both male and female. "The man and the woman together make man."¹³ The holistic picture of humankind is only complete when both male and female are viewed together. Such a description points to the individuality and complementarity of the sexes, and will be more fully developed in Gen 2.

Relationship

The existence of the bipolarity of the sexes in creation implies not only wholeness but relationship. The juxtaposition of male and female in Gen 1:26 intimates what will become explicit in Gen 2: the full meaning of human existence is not in male or female in isolation, but in their mutual communion. The notion of male-female fellowship in Gen 1 has been particularly emphasized by Barth, who maintains that the "I-Thou" relationship of male and female is the *essence* of the *imago Dei*. For Barth, Gen 1:27c is the exposition of vs. 27a. and b. Man-in-fellowship as male and female is what it means to be in the image of God.¹⁴ Barth's exclusive identification of the sexual distinction with the image of God is too restrictive. Our purpose at this point is not to enter into an extended discussion of the meaning of the *imago Dei*.¹⁵ But it may be noted that the Hebrew words *selem* ("Image") and *d'mut* ("likeness"), although possessing overlapping semantic ranges, in the juxtaposition of vs. 26 appear to emphasize both the concrete and abstract aspects of human beings,¹⁶ and together indicate that the person as a whole--both in material/bodily and

¹³ Johannes Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture* (London, Eng., 1926), 1-2:61-62.

¹⁴ Barth's discussion of this point extends through major portions of his Church Dogmatics, vols. 3/1, 3/2, and 3/3. See the helpful summary of his argument in Jewett, pp. 33-48.

¹⁵ The literature on this subject is voluminous. For a survey of views, see especially Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, 1984) pp. 147-155; G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1962), pp. 67-118; Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1986), pp. 33-65; and cf. Phyllis Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, 1978), p. 29, n. 74, for further literature.

¹⁶ See Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 854, 198 [hereinafter cited as

spiritual/mental components--is created in God's image. In his commentary on Genesis, von Rad has insightfully concluded with regard to Gen 1:26: "One will do well to split the physical from the spiritual as little as possible: the whole man is created in God's image."¹⁷

Von Rad has elsewhere further elucidated the meaning of the *imago Dei* in terms of mankind's dominion over the earth. Just as earthly kings set up images of themselves throughout their kingdom as a "sign of sovereign authority," so in the context of Gen 1:26-28 man is God's representative--his image--to uphold and enforce his claim as sovereign Lord.¹⁸ If the image of God includes the whole person, and if it involves human dominion over the earth as God's representative, this, does not, however, exclude the aspect of fellowship between male and female emphasized by Barth. The sexual differentiation of male and female (vs. 27c) is not identical to the image of God (vs. 27a-b), as Barth maintains, but the two are brought into so close connection that they should not be separated, as has been done for centuries. The synthetic parallelism of vs. 27c, immediately following the synonymous parallelism of vs. 27a-b, indicates that the *mode* of human existence in the divine image is that of male and female together.¹⁹

The aspect of personal relationship between the male and female is further highlighted by the analogy of God's own differentiation and relationship in contemplating the creation of humanity. It is hardly coincidental that only once in the creation account of Genesis--only in Gen 1:26--does God speak of himself in the plural: "Let us make man in our image, after *our* likeness." There have been many attempts to account for this use of the plural, but the explanation that appears most consonant with both the immediate context and the analogy of Scripture identifies this usage as a plural of fullness. The "let us" as a plural of fullness "supposes that there is within the divine Being the distinction of personalities" and expresses "all intra-divine deliberation among 'persons' within the divine Being."²⁰

BDB]: cf. N. A1V. Porteous, "Image of God," *IDB*, 2:684-685; von Rad, *Genesis*, PP. 57-58.

¹⁷ Von Rad, *Genesis*, p. 58.

¹⁸ Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:1-16.

¹⁹ See the argumentation for this point in Jewett, p. 45, and *passim*.

"See Gerhard Hasel, "The Meaning of 'L .et Us' in Gen 1:26," *AUSS* 13 (1975):58-66;-the quotation is from p. 65. Cf. Derek Kidney, *Genesis: An Introduction*

The juxtaposition of the plurality of the divine "let us" in vs. 26 with the plurality of the "them" (male and female) in vss. 26-28 is not without significance. Karl Barth appears to be right in his contention that a correspondence or analogy is intended "between this mark of the divine being, namely, that it includes an I and a Thou, and the being of man, male and female."²¹ The statement of this correspondence "preserves with exceeding care the otherness of God,"²² precluding any notion of the bisexuality of God, and yet at the same time underscores the profound importance of the personal relationship and mutuality of communion in human existence as male and female. Just as there takes place in the divine being deliberating over humankind's creation--"the differentiation and relationship, the loving coexistence and co-operation, the I and Thou"²³--, so the same are to be found in the product of God's crowning creative work.

Procreation

It is clear from Gen 1:28 that one of the primary purposes of sexuality is procreation, as indicated in the words "Be fruitful and multiply." But what is particularly noteworthy is that human procreativity "is not here understood as an emanation or manifestation of his [the human being's] creation in God's image." Rather, human procreative ability "is removed from God's image and shifted to a special word of blessing."²⁴ This separation of the *imago Dei* and procreation probably serves as a polemic against the mythological understanding and orgiastic celebration of divine sexual activity. But at the same time a profound insight into the theology of human sexuality is provided.

Procreation is shown to be part of the divine design for human sexuality--as a special added blessing. This divine blessing/command is to be taken seriously and acted upon freely and responsibly in the power that attends God's blessing.²⁵ But sexuality cannot be

and Commentary, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL, 1967), p. 52.

²¹ Barth, 3/1:196.

²² Tribble, p. 21.

²³ Barth, 3/1:196.

²⁴ Von Rad, Genesis, pp. 60-61.

²⁵ The Hebrew word for "bless" (*berak*) in Gen 1 implies the power to accomplish the task which God has set forth in the blessing. See Josef Scharbert, "117

wholly subordinated to the intent to propagate children. Sexual differentiation has meaning apart from the procreative purpose. The procreative blessing is also pronounced upon the birds and fish on the fifth day (vs. 22), but only man is made in the image of God. Gen 1 emphasizes that the sexual distinction in humankind is created by God particularly for fellowship, for relationship, between male and female. This will become even more apparent in Gen 2, where the motif of relationship dominates and procreation is not mentioned at all.

Wholesomeness and Beauty

A final insight from Gen I into the theology of human sexuality emerges from God's personal assessment of his creation. According to vs. 31, when "God saw everything he had made"--including the sexuality of his crowning work of creation--"behold! it was very good." The Hebrew expression *tob m'od* ("very good") connotes the quintessence of goodness, wholesomeness, appropriateness, beauty.²⁶ The syllogism is straightforward. Sexuality (including the act of sexual intercourse) is part of God's creation, part of his crowning act. And God's creation is very good. Therefore, declares the first chapter of Genesis, sex is good, very good. It is not a mistake, a sinful aberration, a "regrettable necessity,"²⁷ a shameful experience, as it has so often been regarded in the history of Christian as well as pagan thought. Rather, human sexuality (as both an ontological state and a relational experience) is divinely inaugurated: it is part of God's perfect design from the beginning and willed as a fundamental aspect of human existence.

It is not within the scope of this study to draw out the full range of philosophical and sociological implications that follow from the theology of human sexuality set forth in Gen 1. Perhaps it may suffice to repeat again the central clause--"male and female created he them"--and then exclaim with Emil Brunner:

brk" *TDOT*, 2:306-307; Hermann W. Beyer, "εὐλογέω, εὐλογητός, εὐλογία, ἐνευλογέω, *TDNT*, 2:755-757.

²⁶ BDB, pp. 373-375; Andrew Bowlings, "טֹב (*tob*)," in R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago, 1980), 1:345-346 [hereafter cited as *TWOT*].

²⁷ Harry Hollis, Jr., *Thank God for Sex: A Christian Model for Sexual Understanding and Behavior* (Nashville, TN, 1975), p. 58. (This is Hollis' phrase, but not his view.)

That is the immense double statement, of a lapidary simplicity, so simple indeed that we hardly realize that with it a vast world of myth and Gnostic speculation, of cynicism and asceticism, of the deification of sexuality and fear of sex completely disappears.²⁸

2. *Sexuality in Genesis 2:4b-25*

In the narrative of Gen 2:4b-25 many of the insights from Gen I into the theology of human sexuality are reinforced and further illuminated, while new vistas of the profound nature of sexual relationships also appear.²⁹

Creation Order

The accounts of creation in Gen 1 and Gen 2 concur in assigning sexuality to the creation order and not to the divine realm. But while Gen 1 does not indicate the precise manner in which God created, Gen 2 removes any possible lingering thoughts that creation occurred by divine procreation. In this second chapter of Scripture is set forth in detail God's personal labor of love, forming man from the dust of the ground and "building"³⁰ woman from one of the man's ribs.

Androgyny or Duality from the Beginning

Some recent studies have revived an older theory that the original *ha'adam* described in Gen 2:7-22 was "a sexually undiffer-

²⁸ Emil Brunner, *Man in Revolt* (Philadelphia, 1947), p. 346.

²⁹ Weighty evidence presented by several recent seminal studies points to the conclusion that the first two chapters of Genesis do not represent separate and disparate sources as argued by proponents of the Documentary Hypothesis. See especially Jacques Doukhan, *The Genesis Creation Story: Its Literary Structure*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 5 (Berrien Springs, MI, 1978). Doukhan's literary/structural analysis shows that instead of comprising multiple sources, Gen 1-2 provides a unified dual perspective on Creation-and on the God of Creation. In Gen 1:1-2:4a we find the picture of an all-powerful, transcendent God (*Elohim*) and a cosmic view of Creation. In Gen 2:4b-25, God is further presented as the personal, caring, covenant God (*Yahweh Elohim*), with Creation described in terms of man and his intimate, personal needs. From this unique dual perspective of infinite/personal God and cosmic/man-centered creation emerges a balanced and enriched presentation of the divine design for human sexuality.

³⁰ See below, pp. 16-17.

entiated earth creature,"³¹ or "basically androgynous: one creature incorporating two sexes."³² But such an hypothesis is not supported by the text. According to Gen 2:7, 8, 15, 16 what God creates before woman is called *ha'adam* "the man." After the creation of woman, this creature is denoted by the same term (vss. 22-23). Nothing has changed in the makeup of "the man" during his sleep except the loss of a rib. There is no hint in the text of any division of an originally bisexual or sexually undifferentiated being into two different sexes. It should be concluded that *ha'adam*, "the man" formed before woman, was not originally androgynous, but was "created in anticipation of the future."³³ He was created with those sexual drives toward union with his counterpart. This becomes apparent in the man's encounter with the animals which dramatically points up his need of "a helper fit for him" or "corresponding to him" (vss. 18, 20). Such a need is satisfied when he is introduced to woman and he fully realizes his sexuality vis-a-vis his sexual complement.

Equality or Hierarchy of the Sexes

The one major question which has dominated the scholarly discussion of sexuality in Gen 2 concerns the relative status of the sexes. Does Gen 2 affirm the equality of the sexes, or does it support a hierarchical view in which man is in some way superior to the woman or given headship over woman at creation. Over the centuries, the preponderance of commentators on Gen 2 have espoused the hierarchical interpretation, and this view has been reaffirmed in a number of recent scholarly studies.³⁴ The main elements of the narrative which purportedly prove a divinely-ordained hierarchical

³¹ Tribble, p. 80.

³² United Church of Christ, *Human Sexuality: A Preliminary Study of the United Church of Christ* (New York, 1977), p. 57.

³³ C. F. Kell, *The First Book of Moses* (Grand Rapids, MI, 19-19), p. 88.

³⁴ For examples, see Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Study on the Role of Women in the Church* (Berrien Springs, MI, 1987), pp. 31, 71-79; Barth, 3,1:300: 3 2:386-387; Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1980), pp. 23-28; Jerry D. Colwell, "A Survey of Recent Interpretations of Women in the Church" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary, 1984); Susan T. Foh, *Women and the Word of God: A Response to Biblical Feminism* (Phillipsburg, NJ, 1979). pp. 61-62; S. H.

view of the sexes may be summarized as follows: (a) man is created first and woman last (2:7, 22), and the first is superior and the last is subordinate or inferior; (b) woman is formed for the sake of man--to be his "helpmate" or assistant to cure man's loneliness (vss. 18-20); (c) woman comes out of man (vss. 21-22), which implies a derivative and subordinate position; (d) woman is created from man's rib (vss. 21-22), which indicates her dependence upon him for life; and (e) the man names the woman (vs. 23), which indicates his power and authority over her.

Do these points really substantiate a hierarchical view of the sexes? Or is Phyllis Tribble correct in asserting that "although such specifics continue to be cited as support for traditional interpretations of male superiority and female inferiority, not one of them is altogether accurate and most of them are simply not present in the story itself."³⁵ Let us look at each point in turn.

First, because man is created first and then woman, it has been asserted that "by this the priority and superiority of the man, and the dependence of the woman upon the man, are established as an ordinance of divine creation."³⁶ But a careful examination of the literary structure of Gen 2 reveals that such a conclusion does not follow from the fact of man's prior creation. Hebrew literature often makes use of an *inclusio* device in which the points of central concern to a unit are placed at the beginning and end of the unit.³⁷ This is the case in Gen 2. The entire account is cast in the form of an *inclusio* or "ring construction"³⁸ in which the creation of man at the beginning of the narrative and the creation of woman at the end of the narrative correspond to each other in importance. The movement in Gen 2 is not from superior to inferior, but from

Hooke, "Genesis," *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (London, Eng., 1962), p. 179; James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1981), pp. 206-214; Edmond Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament* (New York, 1958), pp. 156-157.

³⁵ Tribble, p. 73.

³⁶ Keil, p. 89.

³⁷ For discussion of this construction, see especially the following: James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 (1969):9-10; Mitchel Dahood, *Psalms*, AB (New York, 1966), 1:5; Phyllis Tribble, "Depatriarchal-izing in Biblical Interpretation," *JAAR* 41 (1973):36.

³⁸ Muilenburg, p. 9.

incompleteness to completeness. Woman is created as the climax, the culmination of the story. She is the crowning work of creation.

If a hierarchy of the sexes is not implied in the *order* of their creation, is such indicated by the *purpose* of woman's creation, as is suggested in a second major argument for the hierarchical interpretation? Gen 2:18 records the Lord's deliberation: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him 'ezer k^enegdo [KJV, "a help meet for him"; RSV, "a helper fit for him"; NASB, a helper suitable to him"; NIV, "a helper suitable for him"]." The Hebrew words 'ezer k^enegdo have often been taken to imply the inferiority or subordinate status of woman. For example, John Calvin understood from this phrase that woman was a "faithful assistant" for man.³⁹ But this is not the meaning conveyed by these terms!

The word 'ezer is usually translated as "help" or "helper" in English. This, however, is a misleading translation because the English word "helper" tends to suggest one who is an assistant, a subordinate, an inferior, whereas the Hebrew 'ezer carries no such connotation. In fact, the Hebrew Bible most frequently employs 'ezer to describe a superior helper--God himself as the "helper" of Israel.⁴⁰ The word can also be used with reference to man or animals.⁴¹ It is a relational term, describing a beneficial relationship, but in itself does not specify position or rank, either superiority or inferiority.⁴² The specific position intended must be gleaned from the immediate context. In the case of Gen 2:18 and 20, such position is shown by the word which adjoins 'ezer, namely k^enegdo.

The word *neged* conveys the idea of "in front of" or "counterpart," and a literal translation of k^enegdo is thus "like his counterpart, corresponding to him."⁴³ Used with 'ezer, this term

³⁹ John Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI, n.d.), 1:129.

⁴⁰ Exod 18:-1; Deut 33:7, 26; Ps 33:20; 70:5; 115:9, 10, 11.

⁴¹ Isa 30:5; Hos 13:9; Gen 2:20.

⁴² R. David Freedman, "Woman. A Power Equal to Man," *BAR* (1983):56-58, argues that the Hebrew word 'ezer etymologically derives from the merger of two Semitic roots, 'zr, "to save, rescue," and g^ezr, "to be strong," and in this passage has reference to the latter: woman is (re)ated. like the man, "a power (or strength) superior to the animals.

⁴³ Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testament Libros*, 2d ed. (Leiden, 1958), p. 591.

indicates no less than equality: Eve is Adam's "benefactor/helper," one who in position is "corresponding to him," "his counterpart, his complement."⁴⁴ Eve is "a power equal to man;"⁴⁵ she is Adam's "partner."⁴⁶

As a third alleged indication in Gen 2 of male superiority and female subordination, it has been argued that since woman came out of man, since she was formed from man, therefore she has a derivative existence, a dependent and subordinate status. That her existence was in some way "derived" from Adam cannot be denied. But derivation does not imply subordination! The text indicates this in several ways. We note, for example, that Adam also was "derived"-from the ground (vs. 7)--but certainly we are not to conclude that the ground was his superior! Again, woman is not Adam's rib. It was the raw material, not woman, that was taken out of man, just as the raw material of man was "taken" (Gen 3:19, 23) out of the ground.⁴⁷ What is more, Samuel Terrien rightly points out that woman "is not simply molded of clay, as man was, but she is architecturally 'built' (2:33)." The verb *bnh* "to build," used in the creation account only with regard to the formation of Eve, "suggests an aesthetic intent and connotes also the idea of reliability and permanence."⁴⁸ To clinch the point, the text explicitly indicates that the man was asleep while God created woman. Man had no active part in the creation of woman that might allow him to claim to be her superior.

A fourth argument used to support the hierarchical view of the sexes concerns the woman's creation from Adam's rib. But the very symbolism of the rib points to equality and not hierarchy. The word *sela'* can mean either "side" or "rib."⁴⁹ Since *sela'* occurs in

⁴⁴ Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:149.

⁴⁵ Freedman, pp. 56-58. Freedman notes that in later Mishnaic Hebrew *k^eneged* clearly means "equal," and in light of various lines of biblical philological evidence he forcefully argues that the phrase '*ezer k^enegdo* here should be translated "a power equal to him."

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 56; Gen 2:18, NEB.

⁴⁷ Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 101.

⁴⁸ Samuel Terrien, "Toward a Biblical Theology of Womanhood," in Ruth T. Barnhouse and Urban T. Holmes, III, eds. *Male and Female: Christian Approaches to Sexuality* (New York, 1976), p. 18.

⁴⁹ BDB, p. 854. Numerous theories have been propounded to explain the meaning of the rib in this story: e.g., J. Boehmer, "Die geschlechtliche Stellung des Weibes in

the plural in vs. 21 and God is said to take "one of " them, the reference in this verse is probably to a rib from Adam's side. By "building" Eve from one of Adam's ribs, God appears to be indicating the mutual relationship,⁵⁰ the "singleness of life,"⁵¹ the "inseparable unity"⁵² in which man and woman are joined. The rib "means solidarity and equality."⁵³ Created from Adam's "side [rib]," Eve was formed to stand by his side as an equal. Peter Lombard was not off the mark when he said: "Eve was not taken from the feet of Adam to be his slave, nor from his head to be his ruler, but from his side to be his beloved partner."⁵⁴

This interpretation appears to be further confirmed by the man's poetic exclamation when he saw the woman for the first time (vs. 23): "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"! The phrase "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" indicates that the person described is "as close as one's own body."⁵⁵ It denotes physical oneness and a "commonality of concern, loyalty, and responsibility."⁵⁶ Much can be deduced from this expression regarding the nature of sexuality, as we shall see below, but the expression certainly does not lead to the notion of woman's subordination.

Gen 2 and 3," *Monatschrift fur Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 79 (1939):292, suggests that the "rib" is a euphemism for the birth canal which the male lacks; P. Humbert, *Etudes sur le recit du Paradis* (Neuchatel, 19,10), pp. 57-58 proposes that the mention of the "rib" explains the existence of the navel in Adam: and von Rad, *Genesis*, p.. 89, finds the detail of the rib answering the question why ribs cover the upper but not the lower part of the body". Such suggestions appear to miss the overall context of the passage with its emphasis upon the relations/tip between man and woman.

⁵⁰ Westermann, p. 230.

⁵¹ Collins, p. 153. It may be that the Sumerian language retains the memory of the close relationship between "rib" and "life," for the Sumerian sign it signifies both "life" and "rib." See S. N. Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer* (Garden City, NY, 1959), p. 136. This is not to say, however, that the detail of the rib in Gen 2 has its origin in Sumrian mythology. The story of creation in Gen 2 and the Sumerian myth in which the pun between the "lady of the rib" and "lady who makes live" appears (*ANET*, pp. 37-41), have virtually nothing in common.

⁵² Keil, p. 89.

⁵³ Tribble, "Depatriarchalizing," p. 37.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Stuart B. Babbage. *Christianity and Sex* (Chicago, 1963), p. 10. A similar statement is attributed to other writers as well.

⁵⁵ Collins, p. 153.

⁵⁶ Walter Brueggemann, "Of the Same Flesh and Bone (Gen 2:23a)," *CBQ* 32 (1970):5.10.

The last major argument used to support a hierarchical view of the sexes in Gen 2 is that in man's naming of woman (vs. 23) is implied man's power, authority, and superiority over her. It is true that assigning names in Scripture often does signify authority over the one named.⁵⁷ But such is not the case in Gen 2:23. In the first place, the word "woman" ('*issah*) is not a personal name, but only a generic identification. This is verified in vs. 24, which indicates that a man is to cleave to his '*issah* ("wife"), and further substantiated in Gen 3:20, which explicitly records the man's naming of Eve only after the Fall.

Moreover, Jacques Doukhan has shown that Gen 2:23 contains a pairing of "divine passives," indicating that the designation of "woman" comes from God, not man. Just as in the past, woman "was taken out of man" by God, an action with which the man had nothing to do (he had been put into a "deep sleep"), so in the future she "shall be called woman," a designation originating in God and not man. Doukhan also indicates how the literary structure of the Genesis Creation story confirms this interpretation.⁵⁸ The wordplay in 2:23 between '*is* (man) and '*issah* (wo-man) and the explanation of the woman's being taken out of man are not given to buttress a hierarchical view of the sexes, but rather to underscore man's joyous recognition of his second self. In his ecstatic poetic utterance, the man is not determining who the woman is, but delighting in what God has done. He is saying "yes" to God in recognizing and welcoming woman as the equal counterpart to his sexuality.⁵⁹

In light of the foregoing discussion, I conclude that there is nothing in Gen 2 to indicate a hierarchical view of the sexes. The man and woman before the Fall are presented as fully equal, with

⁵⁷ For examples of the oriental view of naming as the demonstration of one's exercise of a sovereign right over a person, see 2 Kgs 23:34; 24:17; Dan 1:7. Cf. R. Abba, "Name," *IDB*, 3:502.

⁵⁸ See Doukhan, pp. 46-47, for substantiation and further discussion of these points. For other lines of evidence disaffirming man's authoritative naming of woman in Gen 2:23 in contrast to his authoritative naming of the animals in Gen 2:19-20, see especially Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 99-100, and Gerhard Hasel, "Equality from the Start: Woman in the Creation Story," *Spectrum* 7 (1975):23-24.

⁵⁹ See Barth, 3/2:291; Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 100.

no hint of a headship of one over the other or a hierarchical relationship between husband and wife.

Sexuality as Wholeness

Both the first and second chapters of Genesis affirm the attribute of wholeness in the human sexual experience. But in Gen 2 we encounter a twofold amplification of the meaning of sexual wholeness. First, Gen 2:7 articulates a holistic view of man. According to the understanding of anthropology set forth in this verse, man does not *have* a soul, he is a soul. He is a living being, a psychophysical unity.⁶⁰ There is no room in such a view for a Platonic/Philonian dichotomy of body and soul. Excluded is the dualistic notion of the ascetics that the body is evil and therefore all expressions of the body pleasures--including sexual expressions--are contaminated. The holistic view of man presented in Gen 2:7 means that human sexuality cannot be compartmentalized into "the things of the body" versus "the things of the spirit/soul." The human being is a sexual creature, and his/her sexuality is manifested in every aspect of human existence.

The meaning of wholeness is also amplified in Gen 2 with regard to the differentiation between the sexes. Whereas from Gen 1 it was possible to conclude in a general way that both male and female are equally needed to make up the image of God, from Gen 2 we can say more precisely that it is in "creative complementariness"⁶¹ that God designed male and female to participate in this wholeness. Gen 2 opens with the creation of man. But creation is not finished. The man is alone, he is incomplete. And this is "not good" (vs. 18). Man needs an *'ezer k^enegdo*--a helper/ benefactor who is his counterpart. Thus begins man's quest to satisfy his God-instilled "hunger for wholeness."⁶² Such hunger is not satisfied by his animal companions but by the sexual being God has "built" ("aesthetically designed") to be alongside him as his complement. Adam in effect exclaims at his first sight of Eve, "At last, I am whole! Here is the complement of myself!" He recognizes,

⁶⁰ Stephen Sapp, *Sexuality, the Bible, and Science* (Philadelphia, 1977), pp. 5-6.

⁶¹ Terrien, p. 18.

⁶² Sakae Kubo, *Theology and Ethics of Sex* (Washington, DC, 1980), p. 19.

and the narrative instructs us, that "man is whole only in his complementarity with another being who is like unto himself."⁶³

A Multi-dimensional Relationship

Closely connected with "complementary wholeness" is the idea of relationship. If Gen 1 whispers that human sexuality is for fellowship, for relationship, Gen 2 orchestrates this fact with a volume of double forte, and the melody and harmony of the narrative portray richness and beauty in the relational symphony of the sexes.

According to Gen 2, the creation of Eve takes place in the context of loneliness. The keynote is struck in vs. 18: "It is not good that the man should be alone...." The "underlying idea" of vss. 18-24 is that "sexuality finds its meaning not in the appropriation of divine creative powers, but in human sociality."⁶⁴ Man is a social being; sexuality is for sociality, for relationship, companionship, partnership. In principle, this passage may be seen to affirm the various mutual social relationships that should take place between the sexes (as is also true with the "image-of-God" passage in Gen 1); but more specifically, the Genesis account links the concept of sociality to the marriage relationship. This is apparent from 2:24: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." The introductory "therefore" indicates that the relationship of Adam and Eve is upheld as the ideal for all future human sexual relationships. Certain significant insights into the nature of sexuality call for attention in this verse.

First, man leaves. The word *'azab* is a forceful term. It means literally "to abandon, forsake," and is employed frequently to describe Israel's forsaking of Yahweh for false gods.⁶⁵ The "leaving" of Gen 2:24 indicates the necessity of absolute freedom from outside interferences in the sexual relationship. Barth has pointed out that in a very real sense Gen 2 represents the "Old Testament Magna Charta of humanity" as Adam was allowed freely and exuberantly

⁶³ Collins, p. 153. Italics supplied.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ See BDB, pp. 736-737; Deut 28:20; Judg 10:13; 2 Chron 34:25; Isa 1:4; etc.

to recognize and affirm the woman as his partner.⁶⁶ Just as this freedom was essential in the Garden, so it is crucial in all succeeding sexual relationships.

What is particularly striking in vs. 24 is that it is the man who is to "leave." It was a matter of course in the patriarchal society at the time Gen 2 was penned that the wife left her mother and father. But for the husband to "leave" was revolutionary!⁶⁷ In effect, the force of this statement is that both are to leave--to cut loose from those ties that would encroach upon the independence and freedom of the relationship.

Second, man cleaves. The Hebrew verb *dabaq*, "cleave," is another robust term, signifying "strong personal attachment."⁶⁸ It is often used as a technical covenant term for the permanent bond of Israel to the Lord.⁶⁹ As applied to the relationship between the sexes in Gen 2:24, it seems clearly to indicate a covenant context, i.e., a marriage covenant, paralleling the "oath of solidarity" and language of "covenant partnership" expressed by Adam to Eve.⁷⁰ But as was true with Adam, more is involved here than a formal covenant. The word *dabaq* especially emphasizes the inward attitudinal dimensions of the covenant bond. It "implies a devotion and an unshakable faith between humans; it connotes a permanent attraction which transcends genital union to which, nonetheless, it gives meaning."⁷¹

Third, man and woman "become one flesh." We may immediately point out that this "one-flesh" union follows the "cleaving" and thus comes within the context of the marriage covenant. The unitive purpose of sexuality is to find fulfillment inside the marital relationship. Furthermore, the phrase "man and his wife"--with

⁶⁶ Barth, 3/2:291.

⁶⁷ Some have seen behind this passage a hint of a matriarchal social structure, but evidence for such an hypothesis is not convincing. For further discussion of this theory, see Jewett, p. 127.

⁶⁸ See BDB, pp. 179-180; G. Wahlis, "דָּבַק *dabaq*," *TDOT*, 3:80-83; Earl S. Kalland, "דָּבַק (*dabaq*)," *TWOT*, 1:177-178.

⁶⁹ See, e.g., Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:1; Josh 22:5; 23:8.

⁷⁰ For discussion of the covenant language used by Adam, see Brueggemann, pp. 532-542.

⁷¹ Collins, p. 153.

both nouns in the singular--clearly implies that the sexual relationship envisioned is a monogamous one, to be shared exclusively between two marriage partners. The LXX translation makes this point explicit: "they two shall become one flesh."

The "one-flesh" relationship certainly involves the sexual union; sexual intercourse. The physical act of coitus may even be in view in this passage as the primary means of establishing the "innermost mystery"⁷² of oneness. But this is by no means all that is included. The term *basar*, "flesh," in the OT refers not only to one's physical body but to a person's whole existence in the world.⁷³ By "one flesh" is thus connoted "mutual dependence and reciprocity in all areas of life,"⁷⁴ a "unity that embraces the natural lives of two persons in their entirety."⁷⁵ It indicates a oneness and intimacy in the total relationship of the whole person of the husband to the whole person of the wife.⁷⁶

Sexuality for Procreation

With regard to Gen 1 we noted that a primary purpose of sexuality was for personal relationship, and that procreation was presented as a special added blessing. The significance of the unitive purpose of sexuality is highlighted in Gen 2 by the complete absence of any reference to the propagation of children. This omission is not to deny the importance of procreation (as becomes apparent in later chapters of Scripture). But by the "full-stop"⁷⁷ after "one-flesh" in vs. 24, sexuality is given independent meaning and value. It does not need to be justified only as a means to a superior end, i.e., procreation.

The Wholesomeness of Sexuality

The narrative of Gen 2 highlights the divine initiative and approbation in the relationship of the sexes. After the formation of

⁷² Otto Piper, *The Biblical View of Sex and Marriage* (New York, 1960), pp. 52-67, explores the possible dimensions of this "inner mystery."

⁷³ See John N. Oswalt, "בָּשָׂר (basar)," *TWOT*, 1:136; N.P. Bratsiotis, "בָּשָׂר basar," *TDOT*, 2:325-329.

⁷⁴ Piper, p. 28.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷⁶ Herbert J. and Fern Miles, *Husband-Wife Equality* (Old Tappan, NJ, 1978), p. 164.

⁷⁷ Walter Trobisch, *I Married You* (New York, 1971), p. 20.

woman, the Lord God "brought her to the man" (vs. 22). The Creator Himself, as it were, celebrated the first marriage.⁷⁸ Thus, the "very good" which is pronounced upon humankind and human sexuality in Gen 1 is in Gen 2 concretized in the divine solemnization of the "one-flesh" union between husband and wife.

Sexuality is wholesome because it is inaugurated by God himself. Since the inauguration occurs within the context of a divine-human relationship, sexuality must be seen to encompass not only horizontal (human) but also vertical (spiritual) dimensions. According to the divine design, the sexual relationship between husband and wife is inextricably bound up with the spiritual unity of both man and woman with their Creator.

A final word on God's Edenic ideal for sexuality comes in vs. 25: "And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed." The Hebrew construction of the last English phrase may be more accurately translated "they were not ashamed before one another."⁷⁹ Viewed in contrast with the "utter [shameful] nakedness"⁸⁰ mentioned in Gen 3, the intent here is clear: namely, that "shameless sexuality was divinely ordered; shameful sexuality is the result of sin."⁸¹ According to God's original design, sexuality is wholesome, beautiful, and good. It is meant to be experienced between spouses without fear, without inhibitions, without shame and embarrassment.

Just as the "one-flesh" experience applied to more than the physical union, so the concept of nakedness probably connotes more than physical nudity.⁸² As Walter Trobisch states it, there is implied the ability "to stand in front of each other, stripped and undisguised, without pretensions, without hiding, seeing the partner as he or she really is, and showing myself to him or her as I really am--and still not be ashamed."⁸³

⁷⁸ See Brueggemann, pp. 538-542, for evidence for linguistic and contextual indications of a covenant-making ceremony.

⁷⁹ BDB. p. 102.

⁸⁰ This will be discussed in a subsequent article, "The Theology of Sexuality in the Beginning: Genesis 3." forthcoming in *AUSS*.

⁸¹ Collins, p. 154.

⁸² See Kidner, p. 66: Vs. 25 indicates "the perfect ease between them." The theory that Adam's and Eve's nakedness without shame refers to their lack of consciousness of their Sexuality Will be orated in my forthcoming article (See n. 80, above).

⁸³ Trobisch, p. 82.

As we complete our discussion of the theology of sexuality in Gen 2, we must reject the claim that this chapter displays a "melancholy attitude toward sex."⁸⁴ Instead, we must affirm with von Rad that Gen 2 "gives the relationship between man and woman the dignity of being the greatest miracle and mystery of creation."⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Guthbert A. Simpson, "The Book of Genesis: Introduction and Exegesis," *IB* (New York, 1952), 1:485-486.

⁸⁵ Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:150.

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THE THEOLOGY OF SEXUALITY IN THE BEGINNING: GENESIS 3

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The creation accounts (Gen 1-2) coupled with the portrayal of disruption and divine judgment presented in Gen 3 have been described as of seminal character and determinative for a biblical theology of human sexuality. In a previous article we focused upon the theology of sexuality in the creation accounts.¹ Now we will explore the theological insights on sexuality emerging from Gen 3. Two basic issues related to sexuality call for our attention in Gen 3. The first concerns the contention by some scholars that Adam and Eve's "knowledge of good and evil" and their knowledge "that they were naked" (3:5, 7) both refer to the awakening of their sexual consciousness. The second issue involves the debate over the correct interpretation of the divine judgment on Eve (3:16).

1. Sexuality in Genesis 3:5

We cannot be long detained by those who contend that the knowledge of good and evil gained by Adam and Eve as a result of eating the forbidden fruit was actually a consciousness of sex.² Stephen Sapp rightly points out that "such a position assumes that sexuality itself occasions shame by its very nature (once one is aware of it)" and thus "suggests that sexuality was not part of God's intention for humans in creation," whereas both Gen 1 and 2, to the contrary, "consider sexuality to be a purposeful part of God's good creation, with no indication whatsoever that sexual experience was jealously withheld from Adam and Eve."³

¹ Richard M. Davidson, "The Theology of Sexuality in the Beginning: Genesis 1-2," *AUSS* 26 (1988):5-24.

² See, e.g., Cuthbert A. Simpson, "The Book of Genesis: Introduction and Exegesis," *IB* (New York, 1952), 1:485-486. For a full discussion, cf. Robert Gordis, "The Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Old Testament and Qumran Scrolls," *JBL* 76 (1957):123-138.

³ Stephen Sapp, *Sexuality, the Bible, and Science* (Philadelphia, 1977), p. 18; cf. pp. 17-19 for further arguments advanced by Sapp against this option.

The Nakedness of Adam and Eve

The idea that a consciousness of sex came only after the Fall seems to be largely based on a misunderstanding of the meaning of Gen 3:7 and its relationship to Gen 2:25. It has been argued that since, according to Gen 3:7, Adam and Eve knew that they were naked only after the Fall, then Gen 2:25 must mean that they were not aware of their nakedness (or sexuality) in the beginning. But this line of argument fails to recognize that Gen 2 and 3 utilize two different Hebrew words for "naked."

In Gen 2:25 the word for "naked" is *'arum*, which elsewhere in Scripture frequently refers to someone not fully clothed or not clothed in the *normal* manner.⁴ Gen 2:25 does not explicitly indicate in what way Adam and Eve were without clothes in the normal sense ("normal" from the post-Fall perspective), but the semantic range of *'arum* is consonant with the conclusion toward which parallel creation/Paradise passages point, namely, that Adam and Eve were originally "clothed" with "garments" of light and glory.⁵ If such is the case in Gen 2:25, then the contrast with Gen 3 becomes clear. In Gen 3:7, 10, 11, the Hebrew word for "naked" is *'erom*, which elsewhere in Scripture always appears in a context of total (and usually shameful) exposure, describing someone "utterly

⁴ In 1 Sam 19:24, for instance, the term is "used of one who, having taken off his mantle, goes only clad in his tunic" (William Gesenius, *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* [Grand Rapids, MI, 1949], p. 653). Again, in Isa 20:2 the reference is to one "dressed with saq only" (Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamentis Libros*, 2d ed. [Leiden, 1958], p. 735); cf. Jn 21:7. Other passages employ the term in the sense of "ragged, badly clad" (Job 22:6; 24:7, 10; Isa 58:7; Gesenius, p. 653).

⁵ We note in particular the parallel creation account in Ps 104. Jacques Doukhan, *The Genesis Creation Story: Its Literary Structure*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, Vol. 5 (Berrien Springs, MI, 1978), pp. 81-88, has analyzed the point-by-point parallels between Ps 104 and the Genesis creation story. What is significant for our discussion at this point is that in Ps 104, along with the poetic description of God's creative *work*, there appears to be at least one indication of his *appearance*, or rather, his "clothing" (vss. 1-2): "Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, who coverest thyself with light as with a garment." If God is portrayed as clothed with "garments" of light and majesty, it is not unreasonable to deduce that man, created in the image and likeness of God, is similarly clothed. Ps 8:5 (6 Heb) may also point in this direction. According to this verse describing man in Paradise, God "crowns" or "surrounds" (the latter if *'atar* is taken as *Qal*) him with glory and honor.

naked" or "bare."⁶ As a result of sin, the human pair find themselves "utterly naked," bereft of the garments of light and glory, and they seek to clothe themselves with fig leaves.

Even this post-Fall "nakedness" should not, however, be interpreted as causing Adam and Eve to be ashamed of their own bodies before each other. There is no mention of mutual embarrassment or shame *before each other*. The context is rather one of fear and dread *before God*. Adam says to God (3:10), "I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

Adam's nakedness described here is also obviously more than physical nudity, for Adam depicts himself as still naked even though already covered with fig leaves. The nakedness of Gen 3 seems also to include a sense of "being unmasked,"⁷ a consciousness of guilt, a nakedness of soul. Likewise, God's clothing of Adam and Eve with skins appears to represent more than a concern for physical covering, more than a demonstration of the modesty appropriate in a sinful world, though these are no doubt included. The skins from slain animals seem to intimate the beginning of the sacrificial system and the awareness of a substitutionary atonement, because of which "man need no longer feel unmasked or ashamed."⁸

2. *The Divine Judgment on Eve*

When God comes to the Garden after Adam and Eve sinned, he initiates an encounter that constitutes nothing less than "a legal process," a "trial and punishment by God."⁹ God begins the legal proceedings with an interrogation of the "defendants," and the defensive and accusatory responses by Adam and Eve (vss. 9-14) indicate the rupture in interhuman (husband-wife) and divine-human relationships that has occurred as a result of sin. Following the legal interrogation and establishment of guilt, God pronounces

⁶ See Ezek 16:7, 22, 39; 18:7, 16; 23:29; Dent 28:48. Cf. Gesenius, p. 625; Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1953) pp. 735-736 (hereinafter cited as BDB); Koehler and Baumgartner, p. 702.

⁷ Claus Westermann, *Creation* (London, Eng., 1974), p. 95.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

the sentence in the form of curses (over the serpent and the ground, vss. 14, 17) and judgments (for the man and the woman, vss. 16-19). What is of particular concern to us is the judgment pronounced upon the woman (vs. 16):

- (a) I will greatly multiply your pain [labor] in childbearing;
- (b) in pain [labor] you shall bring forth children,
- (c) yet your desire shall be for your husband,
- (d) and he shall rule over you.

The first two lines of poetic parallelism in this verse (a and b) indicate that as a result of sin, childbearing will involve much 'issabon (RSV, "pain") for the woman. The word 'issabon occurs only three times in Scripture: here, vs. 17, and 5:29. The context of vs. 17 demands that 'issabon in that verse be translated as "toil" or "labor" (as in RSV) and not "pain": "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil/labor ['issabon] you shall eat of it all the days of your life." The same translation of 'issabon is required by the context in Gen 5:29, and seems to be also more appropriate in Gen 3:16, with an emphasis upon the hard work and not the pain.¹⁰ Such an emphasis is accurately captured by the English term "labor" used to describe the birthing experience of woman.

But what is the meaning of the last two enigmatic lines (vs. 16 c and d) of the divine sentence upon the woman? The answer to this question is crucial for a proper understanding of the nature of God's design for sexual relationships after the Fall.

Interpretations of the Divine judgment on Eve

Five major views have been advanced in the history of biblical interpretation. A first, and perhaps the most common, position maintains that the subordination of woman is a creation ordinance, God's ideal from the beginning, but as a result of sin this original form of hierarchy between the sexes is distorted and corrupted and must be restored by the Gospel.¹¹

¹⁰ See BDB, pp. 780-781.

¹¹ John Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI, n.d.), 1:172, for instance, sees woman's position before the Fall as "liberal and gentle subjection," but after the Fall she is "cast into servitude." C. F. Keil, *The First Book of Moses* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1949), p. 103, similarly understands the original position of

A second major interpretation also views subordination as a creation ordinance but sees in Gen 3:16 not a distortion but a reaffirmation of subordination as a blessing and a comfort to the woman in her difficulties as a mother. The meaning of vs. 16c-d may be paraphrased: "You will have labor and difficulty in your motherhood, yet you will be eager for your husband and he will rule over you (in the sense of care for and help you, not in the sense of dominate and oppress you)."¹²

A third major view contends that the subordination of woman to man did not exist before the Fall, and the mention of such a subordination in Gen 3:16 is only a description of the evil consequences of sin (the usurpation of authority by the husband), to be removed by the Gospel, and not a permanent prescription of God's will for husband-wife relationships after sin.¹³ Proponents of this position underscore the culturally conditioned nature of this passage and vigorously deny that it represents a divinely ordained normative position for sexual relationships after the Fall.

A fourth major position concurs with the third view that the submission of wife to husband is part of the evil consequences of

man-woman as rule/subordination rooted in mutual esteem and love, but he argues that after sin the woman has a "desire bordering on disease" and the husband exercises "despotic rule" over his wife. James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1981), pp. 218-219, concurs with a pre-Fall hierarchy of the sexes and a post-Fall distortion, but argues that Gen 3:16 should be interpreted along the lines of the similarly worded statement of God to Cain in Gen 4:7. Just as God warned Cain that sin's desire would be to control him, but he must master it, so woman's desire would be to control/manipulate man and the husband must master her desire. Cf. a similar position in Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Study on the Role of Women in the Church* (Berrien Springs, MI, 1987), pp. 79-84.

¹² Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1980), p. 35. Clark does not rule out view 2 as a possibility, but he more strongly favors view 1. See also Ambrose, *De Paradiso*, p. 350 (quoted in Clark, p. 677): "Servitude, therefore, of this sort is a gift of God. Wherefore, compliance with this servitude is to be reckoned among blessings."

¹³ See, e.g., Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Women* (Philadelphia, 1979), p. 80; Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female: A Study of Sexual Relationships from a Theological Point of View* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1975), p. 114; Phyllis Trible, "Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation," *JAAR* 41(1974):41; cf. Raymond Collins, "The Bible and Sexuality," *BTB* 7(1977):149; Helmut Thielicke, *The Ethics of Sex* (New York, 1964), p. 8; Patricia Gundry, *Woman Be Free!* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1977), pp. 60-63.

the Fall and did not exist as a creation ordinance. But in the fourth view Gen 3:16 is to be understood as *prescriptive* and not just *descriptive*--i.e., it presents God's normative pattern for the relationship of husband and wife after the Fall.¹⁴

A final view agrees with the second that vs. 16c-d is a blessing and not a curse, but differs in denying that subordination of woman to man is a creation ordinance. This position also argues, in effect, that even in Gen 3 no hierarchy or headship in the sexes is either prescribed or described.¹⁵ According to this view, the word for "rule" (vs. 16d) is translated "to be like," emphasizing the equality of husband and wife.

Assessment of the Divine judgment on Eve

In our attempt to assess the true intent of this passage, we must immediately call into question those interpretations which proceed from the assumption that a hierarchy of the sexes existed before the Fall--i.e., views 1 and 2. The analysis of Gen 1-2 in my previous article has led to the conclusion that no such subordination or subjection of woman to man was present in the beginning.¹⁶

¹⁴ See e.g. Francis Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time* (Downers Grove, IL, 1975), pp. 93-94; cf. Theodorus C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1970), p. 399.

¹⁵ See, e.g., John H. Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed: The Status of Women in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, 1977), p. 18.

¹⁶ See Davidson, pp. 5-24. The views favoring a hierarchy of the sexes already in creation seem to be largely based on the Pauline passages that, at first sight, appear to ground the subordination of woman in creation. Two passages are especially in view: I Tim 2:13 and 1 Cor 11:8-9. This is not the place for an exposition of these Pauline statements. But it seems that most studies of these passages have made Paul say what in fact he does not say. Paul does indeed refer to creation in discussing the submission of wife to husband. But he does not say that the submissive role was in effect from creation. Rather, it seems more likely that Paul is arguing that after the Fall, when a subjection of one spouse to another was necessary in order to preserve union and harmony (see discussion below, pp. 127-130), God chose the man to "rule," because, among other reasons, he was created first and Eve was made from and for Adam. It should be noted that in 1 Tim 2:14, Paul specifically places the submission within the context of the Fall. Krister Stendahl seems to be correct when he points out that Gen 3:16 constitutes "the decisive Scriptural passage for the whole New Testament's instruction concerning the submission of women." (Krister Stendahl, *The Bible and the Role of Women: A Case Study in Hermeneutics* [Philadelphia, 1966], p. 29.) In another Pauline passage describing subordination of women, 1 Cor 14:34-35, support for Paul's position is given as "the words of the

Furthermore, it appears that view 3 is unsatisfactory, for it fails to take seriously the judgment/punishment context of the passage. As we have already noted, Gen 3:16 comes in a legal "trial" setting. God's pronouncement is therefore not merely a culturally conditioned description. It is a divine sentence! It must be concluded that "the judgments of God, who is Lord of time *and* culture, are universally applicable to the fallen (sinful) world."¹⁷ Just as God destines the snake to crawl on its belly; just as God ordains that woman's childbirth is to involve her "going into labor"; just as God curses the ground so that it will not produce crops spontaneously but require man's cultivation and labor--so God pronounces the irrevocable sentence upon Eve with regard to her future relationship with Adam outside the Garden.

It seems clear that according to Gen 3:16c-d a change is instituted in the relationship between the sexes after the Fall, a change which involves the subjection/submission of the wife to the husband. The force of vs. 16d is difficult to avoid: "He [your husband] shall rule over you." The word *masal* in this form in vs. 16d definitely means "to rule" (and not "to be like") and definitely implies subjection.¹⁸ Theodorus Vriezen correctly concludes that woman's position after the Fall is one of subjection to her husband: "This is considered as a just and permanent punishment in Gen iii."¹⁹ Umberto Cassuto aptly paraphrases and amplifies the divine

law." In this phrase, according to Stendahl, "it is still Gen 3:16 which is alluded to." Statements regarding creation are made only with reference to their applicability after the Fall. And significantly, only *after* the Fall is Adam representative (Gen 3:9; cf. Hurley, p. 216).

¹⁷ Susan T. Foh, *Women and the Word of God: A Response to Biblical Feminism* (Phillipsburg, NJ, 1979), p. 66.

¹⁸ Recent attempts by some feminists to translate *masal* as "to be like" instead of "to rule" face insurmountable lexical/grammatical/contextual obstacles. It is true that (following BDB nomenclature) the root *mull* in the *Niph'al* does signify "to be like, similar," but in Gen 3:16 the root *msl* is in the *Qal*. Both *msl*^{II} "to use a proverb" and *msl*^{III} "to rule" occur in the *Qal*, but the context of Gen 3:16 seems to clearly preclude the idea of "use a proverb" (*msl*). That *msl*^{III} "to rule" is intended in this passage is confirmed by the use of the accompanying preposition *be*, the normal preposition following *msl*^{III} (cf. BDB, p. 605), and other Hebrew words of ruling, governing, restraining (*mlk*, *rdh*, *slt*, *'sr*, etc.), and never used with *mull* or *msl*^{II}. Arguments based largely on the meaning of ancient Near Eastern cognates should not be allowed to override the biblical context, grammar, and usage.

¹⁹ Vriezen, p. 399.

sentence: "Measure for measure; you influenced your husband and caused him to do what you wished; henceforth, you and your female descendants will be subservient to your husbands."²⁰

But we should immediately note that the word *masal*, "rule," employed in vs. 16 is not the same word used to describe human-kind's rulership over the animals in Gen 1:26, 28. In the latter passages the verb is *radah*, "to tread down, have dominion over,"²¹ not *masal*. A careful distinction is maintained between human-kind's dominion over the animals and the husband's "rule" over his wife. Furthermore, although the verb *masal* does consistently indicate submission, subjection, or dominion in Scripture, "the idea of tyrannous exercise of power does not lie in the verb."²² In fact, there are many passages where *masal* is used with the connotation of "rule" in the sense of "comfort, protect, care for, love."²³

The semantic range of the verb *masal* thus makes it possible to understand the divine sentence in vs. 16 as involving not only punishment but blessing, just as the judgments pronounced upon the serpent and man included an implied blessing in the curse/judgment.²⁴ That the element of blessing is especially emphasized in this verse appears to be confirmed by recognizing the probable,

²⁰ Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem, 1961), 1:165.

²¹ BDB, pp. 921-922.

²² John Skinner, *Genesis*, ICC (Edinburgh, 1930), p. 53.

²³ See e.g., 2 Sam 23:3; Prov 17:2; Isa 40:10; 63:19; Zech 6:13. Cf. Robert D. Culver, "משל (*masal*) III," *TWOT*, 1:534: "*masal* usually receives the translation 'to rule,' but the precise nature of the rule is as various as the real situations in which the action or state so designated occur." Specific examples follow to support this statement. Note, e.g., that the first usage of *masal* in Scripture is in reference to the two great lights created by God (Gen 1:16)-they were to "dominate" (NJV) the day and night.

²⁴ Hurley, pp. 216-219, has rightly pointed out how in each of the divine judgments in this chapter there is a blessing as well as a curse. In the curse upon the serpent appears a veiled blessing in the *Protoevangelion* (3:15): "The warfare between Satan and the woman's seed comes to its climax in the death of Christ." (Hurley, p. 217; cf. Walter Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* [Grand Rapids, MI, 1978], pp. 35-37, for persuasive evidence in favor of this traditional interpretation in contrast to the modern critical tendency to see here only an aetiological reference.) Likewise, in the curse of the ground and the "toil" that is the punishment of Adam, there is at the same time a blessing in that God promises the ground will continue to yield its fruit and man will still be able to eat of it. Furthermore, the term *ba'abur* employed in vs. 17 probably means "for the sake of"

synonymous parallelism between vs. 16c and vs. 16d.²⁵ God pronounces that even though the woman would have difficult "labor" in childbirth--an ordeal that would seem naturally to discourage her from continuing to have relations with her husband--"yet," God assures her, "your desire shall be for your husband." The meaning of the Hebrew word *ṭ̄sugah*, "strong desire, yearning,"²⁶ which appears only three times in Scripture, is illuminated by its only other occurrence in a context of man-woman relationship, i.e., Cant 7:10 (11 Heb).²⁷ In this verse the Shulamite bride joyfully exclaims, "I am my beloved's, and his *desire* [*ṭ̄sugah*] is for me." Along the lines of this usage of *ṭ̄sugah* in the Song of Songs indicating a wholesome sexual desire, the term appears to be employed in Gen 3:16c to denote a positive blessing accompanying the divine judgment. A divinely ordained sexual yearning of wife for husband will serve to sustain the union that has been threatened in the ruptured relations resulting from sin.

If Gen 3:16d is seen to be in close parallelism with vs. 16c, then the emphasis upon blessing as well as judgment seems to accrue also to man's relationship with his wife. The husband's "rule"

(KJV) and not "because of " (RSV) inasmuch as the meaning of "because" is already expressed by *ki* earlier in the verse. The ground is cursed "for his [Adam's] sake"--that is, the curse is for Adam's benefit. Though it did result from Adam's sin, it also is to be regarded as a needful discipline, part of the divine plan for man's recovery from the results of sin.

²⁵ Otwell, p. 18, cogently argues that the normal structure of Hebrew parallelism is followed here in that Gen 3:16a and b are in parallel and 3:16c and d are likewise in parallel. As the first two parallel members of this verse duplicate content with regard to childbearing, so "we may expect. . . that 'he shall rule over you' parallels 'your desire shall be for your husband.'" Otwell's argument is strengthened by the use of the conjunctive translated by "yet."

²⁶ See BDB, p. 1003.

²⁷ The only other occurrence of this word in the Hebrew Bible is in Gen 4:7, which has no reference to a man-woman relationship. Despite the similarity of grammar and vocabulary, the latter verse must not be held up as a standard of interpretation for Gen 3:16, which involves a completely different context. Those who interpret Gen 3:16 by means of 4:7 generally hold to the hierarchy of the sexes as a creation ordinance, and therefore must find something *more* than subordination in 3:16. But it hardly seems justified to compare the experience of Eve with the picture of sin as a wild animal crouching in wait for his prey (Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* [Downer's Grove, IL, 1967], p. 75). For a discussion of the possible reasons for similar wording between the widely different contexts of Gen 3:16 and 4:7, see Cassuto, 1:212-213.

over his wife, even though it grows out of the results of sin, may be regarded as a blessing in preserving the harmony and union of the relationship. As is implied in the semantic range of *masal*, and as becomes explicit in the Song of Songs, this is to be a "rule," not of tyrannical power, but of protection, care, and love.

3. Conclusion

We thus conclude that of the suggested interpretations for Gen 3:16 described above, view 4 is to be preferred, in that there is a normative divine sentence announcing a subjection/submission of wife to husband as a result of sin. This involves, however, not only a negative judgment but also (and especially) a positive blessing (as suggested in views 2 & 5).

Two final points must be underscored with regard to a theology of sexuality in Gen 3. First, it must be noted that the relationship of subjection/submission prescribed in vs. 16 is *not* presented as applicable to man-woman relationships in general. Gen 3 provides no basis for suggesting that the *basic equality* between male and female established in creation was altered as a result of the Fall. The context of Gen 3:16 is specifically that of marriage: a *wife's* desire for her husband and the *husband's* "rule" over his wife. The text indicates a submission of wife to husband, not a general *subordination* of woman to man. Any attempt to extend this prescription beyond the husband-wife relationship is not warranted by the text.²⁸

²⁸ Some commentators argue that in such passages as 1 Cor 14:34-35 and 1 Tim 2:13-14, Paul has widened the original submission of wife to husband in Gen 3:16 to include the submission of all women to men in general, and based on this, he is thought to have excluded woman from teaching authority in the church, etc. But may I suggest this widening may be in the minds of the commentators and not, in the mind of Paul! The possible ambiguity comes because in the original text the same Greek word (*gyne*) means both wife and woman, and another single Greek word (*aner*) means both husband and man. In these crucial Pauline passages on the role of woman which allude to Gen 3:16, the translation can be either "woman-man" or "wife-husband." These passages that have usually been taken to refer to the role of woman in relation to man in general, may instead be referring to the relationship of wives to their husbands and may have nothing whatever to do with limiting woman's sphere of service and leadership in the church. As a case in point, 1 Tim 2:11-12 is translated in the RSV: "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over man; she is to keep silent." But the Williams translation puts it this way: "A married woman must

Second, we must emphasize that although in Gen 3 the husband is assigned the role of "first among equals"²⁹ so as to preserve harmony and union in the marriage partnership, yet this does not contradict or nullify the summary statement of Gen 2:24 regarding the nature of the relationship between husband and wife. As we have already observed,³⁰ Gen 2:24 is written in such a way as to indicate its applicability to the post-Fall conditions. God's ideal for the nature of sexual relationship after the Fall is still the same as it was for Adam and Eve in the beginning--to "become one flesh." The divine judgment/blessing in Gen 3:16 was given, we may conclude, in order to facilitate the achievement of the original divine design within the context of a sinful world.

learn in quiet and perfect submission. I do not permit a married woman to practice teaching or domineering over a husband; she must keep quiet." A world of difference in meaning! For evidence supporting this latter translation, see N. J. Hommes, "Let Women Be Silent in Church," *Calvin Theological Journal* 4(1969):5-22. Note in particular how an almost exactly parallel passage in 1 Peter 3:5, 6 clearly demands the translation "*wife/husband*" and not "woman/man." Likewise the passage in 1 Cor 14:34-35 is in close parallel with Eph 5:22-24, and in the latter the translation must be "*wives and husbands*" and not "women and men" in general.

²⁹ Gerhard Hasel, "Equality From the Start," *Spectrum* 17(1975):26. Note the parallel relationship of God and Christ (1 Cor 11:3).

³⁰ See Davidson, pp. 12-24.

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THE ATONEMENT AND HUMAN SACRIFICE

DAVID R. DILLING

Many trusting hearts have paused to ponder the weighty words of Genesis 22:2, "Take now thy son . . . and offer him for a burnt-offering." This text prompted Søren Kierkegaard to ask, "Is there such a thing as a teleological suspension of the ethical?" Most serious readers of Genesis 22 have doubtless shared the concern which promoted Kierkegaard's enquiry.

The problem with which we are here concerned regards the interpretation of the phrase, "And offer him there for a burnt-offering." Did this mean that Abraham was actually to kill and cremate his own son? If so, how can Yahweh (Jehovah) be justified for making such a command? Are not such sacrifices prohibited? Is not the very idea abhorrent, and does not the very suggestion offend our moral sensitivity? Or was Abraham merely commanded to wholly dedicate his son to Yahweh? In this case, why is the expression *'olah* used, and how can God be vindicated for allowing Abraham so grossly to misinterpret His will? In either case there is a theodicy--the problem of reconciling the divine command with the otherwise known divine nature and purpose.

There is, to be sure, an awesome aspect to the stern, succinct narrative regarding the sacrifice of Isaac. Unfortunately, many readers have been overawed. The present study is not slanted to the liberal theologian, but to the otherwise conservative interpreter who through his awe at the sacrifice of Isaac has prepared himself for major hermeneutical and Christological concessions.

The severity of Abraham's test and hence the significance of the problem of this study was greatly multiplied by the soteriological implications of his action. The promise of salvation and blessing was to come through Isaac. This was clear enough to Abraham. But if to him, how much more is that clear to us who have the full revelation concerning that seed through whom all nations will be blessed, even Jesus. The Divine Providence seems to delight in manifesting the glory and power of God in such incidents where the hope for the fulfillment of the Messianic promise hangs by the finest thread--and that about to be cut off. As in the day that Cain killed Abel; as in the day that Athaliah destroyed all the seed royal save Joash; as in the day that Haman devised his wicked plot against the kin of Mordecai; and as in the day that Herod sought the life of Messiah Himself; so it seemed on this occasion, Abraham was commanded not only to sacrifice his beloved son, "but to cut in pieces, or cast into the fire, the charter of his salvation, and to have nothing left for himself, but death and hell."¹

Two problems bearing on the sacrifice of Isaac demand attention before the nature of that sacrifice can rightly be evaluated. These are the relation of Abraham to the rite of human sacrifice and the attitude of Yahweh toward the same.

THE PRACTICE OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

The sacrifice of Isaac has traditionally been related in one way or another to the practice of human sacrifice. It is supposed that such sacrifices were prevalent in Abraham's day. It

is urged on the one hand that Abraham's offering was qualitatively identical to that of his pagan ancestors and neighbors. Others maintain that the experience of Abraham is unique, and should be compared only with the sacrificial death of Christ, to which it bears a typical relationship.

In the early stages of modern archaeological discovery, generalizations regarding practices such as human sacrifice were sometimes made with too great haste. Time has tempered the judgment of authorities, but the evidence that such sacrifices were actually carried out remains intact. In Mesopotamia, for example, we have the positive evidence of a published Babylonian cylinder seal which unmistakably portrays the actual execution of a human sacrifice.² A.H. Sayce, British Assyriologist of a generation ago, has called attention to an Akkadian poem of pre-Semitic times with its later Assyrian translation concerning the sacrifice of a firstborn son. It says distinctly, "His offspring for his life he gave."³

Biblical evidence that human sacrifice was known in Mesopotamia in later times is found in II Ki. 17:31, ". . . And the Sepharvites burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim." Among the Canaanites, the silence of the Ugaritic texts with respect to human sacrifice⁴ has confirmed the opinion of Prof. Albright that human sacrifice, though well known, "does not seem to have been practiced quite so frequently as used to be thought."⁵ Among the Hebrews, it must be conceded that human sacrifice was never an established or recognized part of the Jewish religion. The sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter, for example, will admit of interpretation other than that of a true human sacrifice.

Although rejecting the idea that human sacrifice was ever a legitimate or recognized element of the religion of Israel, it cannot be denied that the cult did exist as an idolatrous abomination in times of religious declension and national apostasy. Biblical references to such sacrifices uniformly relate them to the worship of the deity Molech.

We conclude therefore that Abraham probably had some knowledge and experience with human sacrifice. It appears, though, that such knowledge was more limited than was supposed in previous generations. On the other hand, we deny on the basis of Levitical legislation that Yahweh ever demanded human sacrifice as a general practice for the nation of Israel. Therefore, whatever else is said of God's demand upon Abraham, it must be acknowledged that his experience is unique in Old Testament history.⁶

YAHWEH AND HUMAN SACRIFICE

It is generally assumed that the Old Testament categorically prohibits the rite of human sacrifice. To be sure, the Mosaic Law contains certain prohibitions in this regard.⁷ However, a thorough examination of these prohibitions sheds significant light on the problem of the sacrifice of Isaac. For example, (1) The legal prohibitions, as well as the prophetic polemics,⁸ are uniformly related to heathen deities. In the passages cited, human sacrifice occurs almost incidentally amid lists of abominations rendered in connection with idolatrous worship. (2) The greater offense is not the sacrifice, but the idolatry involved in offering such a sacrifice to a god other than Yahweh. The first commandment is not, "Thou shalt not offer human sacrifices," but, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."⁹ (3) The Bible contains no prohibitions of human sacrifice to Yahweh. The only possible exception to this principle is the legislation regarding the redemption of the first-born sons in Ex. 13:1-16.

This passage, however, does not condemn human sacrifice. On the contrary, it proves that Yahweh had a very definite claim on all the first-born of Israel, whether man or beast.

The Grace of God in the Redemption of First-Born Sons

Following the judgment on the first-born in Egypt and in connection with the institution of the passover, Yahweh demanded that all the first-born in Israel be sanctified to Him (Ex. 13:1).¹⁰ The clean beasts were to be sacrificed, the unclean were to be redeemed with a lamb or killed, and the first-born of men were to be redeemed. This passage, taken at face value, must mean that Yahweh had a claim on the first-born which would have involved their death, save for His gracious provision for their redemption. Theories of interpretation which refuse to admit this minimize the sovereignty of God and the sinfulness of man. When one rightly appreciates that his very existence and his continuation in existence are dependent upon the grace of God ("It is of Jehovah's loving kindness that we are not consumed," Lam. 3:22), then the demand of God upon the life of any particular individual will pose no problem.

Prof. Sayce, although he insists that, "Abraham, in accordance with the fierce ritual of Syria, believed himself called upon to offer up in sacrifice his only son,"¹¹ nevertheless, admits that Yahweh had a claim on the first-born sons of Israel. "He could claim them, and it was of His own free-will that he waived the claim."¹² It is not surprising that expositors generally have failed to see this point since they have rejected the more ultimate thesis that human sacrifice *per se* is an amoral act. We contend, on the other hand, that no act is inherently moral or immoral except as it impinges on the revealed will of God. Therefore, any argument against human sacrifice which begins with the premise that God could not require such a sacrifice errs in beginning from a false premise. Since the sin of Adam, it is only by the grace of God that any man has been permitted to live. Therefore, *a fortiori*, it is only by the grace of God that any particular individual or group is spared.¹³

Sacrifice or Obedience

The most frequent objection raised against the Biblical presentation of Yahweh and His relationship to sacrifice is that sacrifice, whether of human beings or of beasts, is an element of primitive religion, and that Yahweh really desires not sacrifice at all but obedience.

Those who argue this way support their claims with such texts as Genesis 22, urging that the outcome of the Abraham/Isaac incident proves that Yahweh was really interested in the obedience of Abraham and not the sacrifice of Isaac. Another text, frequently used is I Sam. 15:22:

And Samuel said, Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.¹⁴

The spirit of the objection is evident in the opinion of Marcus Dods with respect to the sacrifice of Isaac:

God meant Abraham to make the sacrifice in spirit, not in the outward act; he meant to write deeply on the Jewish mind the fundamental lesson regarding sacrifice, that it is in the spirit and will that all true sacrifice is made. . . The sacrifice God seeks is the devotion of the living soul, not the consumption of a dead body.¹⁵

This view, carried to its logical conclusion, would eliminate the necessity of the sacrificial death of Christ. This in turn eliminates the atonement and thereby abnegates the whole Christian gospel. A few commentators have seen this and candidly admitted to the consequence. Lange, for example, after drawing the distinction of two kinds of sacrifice, namely, the spiritual consecration of a man as a sacrifice, and the visible slaughter of an animal, argues that the latter is only symbolical and typical of the former. He concludes:

In the crucifixion, these two sacrifices outwardly come together, while really and spiritually they are separated as widely as heaven and hell. Christ yields himself in perfect obedience to the will of the Father, in the judgment of the world. That is the fulfilling of the Israelitish sacrifice. Caiaphas will suffer the innocent to die for the good of the people (John xi. 50), and even Pilate yields him to the will of men (Luke xxiii. 25); this is the completion of Moloch-sacrifice.¹⁶

To assert that the death of Christ was only Pilate's idea is certainly far afield from Pauline theology which says:

. . . While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son. . . (Rom. 5: 10).
 . . . in whom we have redemption through his blood (Eph. 1:7).
 . . . Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweet smell (Eph. 5:2).

The view that sacrifice is subordinate to obedience stems from two diametrically opposed points of view. Those who take the Bible seriously and regard it as indeed the written revelation of God tend to minimize the importance of Old Testament sacrifices on the basis of New Testament theology. The New Testament regards those sacrifices made under the old dispensation as subordinate and inferior to the sacrifice of Christ--"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second" (Heb. 8:7). They are regarded as typical or symbolic--"For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh" (Heb. 10:4). On the other hand, those who do not treat the Bible with such "wooden-headed literalism" deny that God ever wanted or demanded sacrifices at all. The institution of sacrifice is a primitive, savage rite that was merely tolerated for a season until more advanced revelation could be received.

The latter position we reject on the grounds of our presupposition that the Holy Scriptures are an inspired and inerrant revelation, and the corollary that the religion of Israel is therefore essentially revealed rather than evolved. However, even apart from this premise, it is quite possible to establish with a relatively high degree of certitude that the origin of sacrifice must be accounted for on the basis of divine revelation. Hobart Freeman has pointed out that:

The universal prevalence of the practice of vicarious and piacular sacrifice. . . cannot be reasonably explained apart from the idea that it was derived from a common and authoritative source.¹⁷

He has also examined the only alternative explanations, namely, that the practice of sacrifice arose from (1) some dictate of reason; (2) some demand of nature; or (3) some principle of interest, and found them wholly inadequate.¹⁸

The other position, that the Old Testament sacrifices were not so important after all, is quite as serious as the liberal view, for in attempting to exalt the significance of the death of Christ, it actually has the opposite effect of undermining the basis thereof. This view also minimizes the Old Testament teaching that for the individual under the old covenant the Levitical sacrifices were the only possible means of atonement for sin and the only means through which Yahweh chose to be propitiated. Although He expected that the offerer would bring the appointed sacrifice in an attitude of repentance and faith, it by no means follows that a proper "heart-attitude" without the appropriate form would be acceptable to Yahweh.¹⁹

The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ

Having cleared away certain relatively superficial matters we come now to the crux of the whole issue. The crucial question related to the proposed sacrifice of Isaac is this: In the death of Christ, did God actually demand the sacrifice of an innocent human being as a substitutionary sacrifice for others, thereby atoning for their sins and propitiating the wrath of a holy God against them? The dilemma which this question poses for the interpreter is: If answered affirmatively, then there is no a priori ground for denying that God could have demanded the actual slaying of Isaac as a sacrifice. Indeed, if God could demand the death of his own Son as a substitutionary sacrifice, then there is more ground for expecting Him to demand the sacrifice of other human beings than for denying the same. On the other hand, if one answers negatively, then the whole basis for Christian salvation is destroyed.

Biblical Representation of the Atonement

Scholastic theologians established the proposition that our knowledge of God and spiritual realities is neither univocal nor equivocal but analogical. As such our understanding of great spiritual truths is related to a variety of figures. This is especially true of the death of Christ. Historically, theologians have erred through an unbalanced emphasis of one of the figures, excluding or minimizing the others. It is therefore important to know just what the Bible does teach, and to have a balanced picture of that teaching.

The death of Christ and its significance is the very center of the Biblical message. Texts cited here are only a representative sample of the Biblical teaching. The death of Christ is represented as:

(1) Sacrificial.

For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ (I Cor. 5:7).

(2) Expiatory.

For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Heb. 9:13-14).

(3) Propitiatory.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (I Jn. 4: 10).

(4) Redemptive.

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree (Gal. 3:13).

(5) Representative.

For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again (II Cor. 5: 14-15).

(6) Exemplary.

For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps (I Pet. 2:21).

(7) Triumphatorial.

You, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses; having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; having despoiled the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it (Co. 2:15).

(8) Substitutionary.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed (Isa. 53:5-6).

Historical Interpretations

In the process of analysis and systematization the Church has in various periods emphasized the above aspects of Christ's death in different ways. Apart from an outright denial

of the efficacy of Christ's work none of the historical interpretations are wholly in error. They are deficient from the standpoint of what they omit rather than defective from the standpoint of what they include.

The so-called "theories of the atonement" have been enumerated and discussed voluminously. Theories have been variously grouped and separated, contrasted and compared.

The most frequent division is that of (1) subjective theories, (2) objective theories, and (3) all shades of opinion on the "misty flats in between." In our discussion here we have chosen an outstanding representative from each of five distinct positions. It is our intention to show by this study that Christian orthodoxy has developed a doctrine of the atonement which harmonizes with the Biblical picture of Christ's death as a sacrifice, that this sacrifice was in accord with the eternal counsels of God, and that the sacrifice of a theanthropic person was the only possible means of securing a reconciliation between a holy God and sinful men.

Irenaeus (second century, A.D.)--We begin with the Patristic church taking as a representative Irenaeus. The early Fathers obviously believed in salvation through the work of Christ. They adhered closely to the Biblical figures in speaking of Christ's death. However, the early church had no theological formulation on the atonement--as it did, for example, on the trinity or the nature of Christ's person. For this reason it is easy to misinterpret illustrations used by the Fathers as comprising their whole concept of the doctrine. The view of the early church with respect to Christ's death has frequently been designated the "Ransom theory," or the "Devil-ransom theory." This is due to the Patristic emphasis on the redemptive aspect of Christ's work which was crudely spoken of in those days as a ransom price paid by God to Satan. It was deemed necessary, in light of man's bondage to sin, death, and Satan, that the ransom for men's souls be paid to Satan, their captor. It is true that this concept formed a common motif in those early discussions.

And since the Apostasy [i.e. the rebellious spirit, Satan] unjustly held sway over us, and though we were by nature [the possession] of Almighty God, estranged us against nature, making us his own disciples; therefore the Word of God, mighty in all things and not lacking in his own justice, acted justly even in the encounter with the Apostasy itself, ransoming from it that which was his own, not by force, in the way in which it secured the sway over us in the beginning, snatching insatiably what was not its own; but by persuasion, as it became God to receive what he wished; by persuasion, not by use of force, that the principles of justice might not be infringed, and, at the same time, that God's original creation might not perish.²⁰

Irenaeus further spoke of Christ's redeeming and sanctifying every stage of human life by his recapitulation of the same in his own life.

For we have shown that the Son of God did not then begin to exist since he existed with the Father always; but when he was incarnate and made man, he recapitulated [or summed up] in himself the long line of the human race, procuring for us salvation thus summarily, so that what we had lost in Adam, that is, the being in the image and likeness of God, that we should regain in Christ Jesus.²¹

Later writers, particularly Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Athanasius, and Augustine, elaborated the theory of Irenaeus into a fantastic scheme whereby God deceived Satan, as with a fish-hook or mouse-trap, and thus gained the victory over Satan and his forces.

These views, though not a technical theological formulation, characterized the thought of the church for about a thousand years, until the writing of Anselm's Cur Deus Homo.

Anselm (1033-1109).--Few writings in the history of Christianity have had an influence comparable to Anselm's Cur Deus Homo. For all its brevity, it marks a turning point in Christological and soteriological thought. Cur Deus Homo is really the first serious attempt to define the nature of the atonement. As such it should be the terminus a quo of all subsequent discussions.²²

In contrast to Augustine's view that it was good or fitting that God forgive sinners on the basis of Christ's sacrifice, Anselm attempted to prove by logical argument that there was no other way.²³ Only God himself could repay man's infinite debt and only a man could make that payment for men. He attacked the old ransom theory, particularly the idea that Satan had certain "rights" over men. Sin is a violation of God's law, an offense to His honor and majesty. It is therefore the honor of God that must be satisfied rather than the claims of Satan.

The theory of Anselm was largely cast in the terms of feudal society. It was addressed more to the honor or majesty of God than to His holiness. His view, however, was refined by the reformers, especially Calvin, later by John Owen and Jonathan Edwards, and is still held by consistent Calvinists. The view of Anselm, albeit with refinements and variation, is defended by James Denny, George Smeaton, T. J. Crawford, Charles Hodge, A. A. Hodge, W. G. T. Shedd, A. H. Strong, L. S. Chafer, and others of our own era. It is variously referred to as the commercial view, the penal view, the satisfaction view or the substitutionary view.

Abelard (1079-1142).--The objective theories²⁴ were based on the view of sin as a violation of God's law. Man stands separated from God by reason of his own personal sin as well as by reason of his inherited guilt from Adam's sin. He is helpless to change his status of condemnation apart from a sovereign intervention of grace. It is altogether reasonable that the Pelagian view of sin²⁵ should generate a theory of the atonement that enables man to help himself. This type of theory, so-called the subjective or moral influence, was given classic expression by Peter Abelard. In his opinion the purpose of the death of Christ was to impress man with the love of God and thereby morally influence him to surrender his life to God.²⁶

Sin is forgiven gratis on the sole condition of repentance and a desire to do better. In his commentary on Romans, Abelard writes:

Now it seems to us that we have been justified by the blood of Christ and reconciled to God in this way: through this unique act of grace manifested to us--in that his Son has taken upon himself our nature and persevered therein in teaching us by word and example even unto death--he has more fully bound us to himself by love; with the result that our hearts should be enkindled by such a gift of divine grace, and true charity should not now shrink from enduring anything for him.²⁷

A generation ago this theory was defended with various modifications by Albrecht Ritschl and Fredrich Schliermacher of Germany (mystical theory); Edward Irving and McLeod Campbell of Britain (respectively, the theories of gradually extirpated depravity and vicarious repentance); and Horace Bushnell of America (theory of vicarious sacrifice).

This view of Christ's work was one of the outstanding features of modernistic theology and is by no means dead today. William Adams Brown, leading modernist theologian, taught that Christ's saving work consisted of the revelation of the loving character of God which calls forth an answering love in us. This revelation influences us morally by what it shows us to be true.²⁸ Nels Ferre relieves that, "Forgiveness is free and direct to those who are willing henceforth to live responsibly on the Father's terms for the family."²⁹ Unitarians subscribe to the example variation of Abelard's theory.

Grotius (1583-1645).--In the seventeenth century, Hugo Grotius of Leyden, Holland, propounded a theory which Warfield calls a half-way-house between the objective and subjective views.³⁰ His view is called the governmental or rectoral theory and is expressed in legal terminology--Grotius himself being a brilliant lawyer. Sin is regarded as rebellion against the government of God. God in his love will forgive sin but he must demonstrate publicly that He will not condone sin and thus make forgiveness possible.³¹

This theory has been adopted and defended by Arminian theologians from the reformation onward. It is really the highest form of atonement doctrine logically conformable to Arminian theology which rejects the doctrine of imputation, either of sin or of righteousness. Defenders of the governmental view include Charles Finney, F. Godet, R. W. Dale, Alfred Cave, John Miley, and Marcus Dods.

Aulen (Prof. of Systematic Theology, University of Lund).--The ransom theory of the early church, though it erred in the matter of God's deceiving and bribing Satan, had the value of emphasizing man's bondage to Satan and the necessity of his being freed from that bondage by the work of Christ. It supported the objectivity of Christ's work. Luther also emphasized Christ's death as a victory over Satan and man's deliverance from sin, death, and the law. The old view--which was not, as we have noted, a systematic formulation at all--has been revived in our day by a group of Swedish theologians, notably, Gustaf Aulen, and primarily in his book, Christus Victor.³² He refers to his view as the "Classic" or "Triumphantorial" view.

Describing his own view, Aulen writes:

It was. . .my intention to emphasize that the outlook of the Atonement as a drama, where the love of God in Christ fights and conquers the hostile powers, is a central and decisive perspective which never can be omitted and which indeed must stamp every really Christian doctrine of the Atonement.³³

A recent neo-orthodox writer, William Hordern, praises Aulen for rescuing the true view from the unfortunate terminology in which it was expressed. He argues,

It would be strange indeed if the Bible taught the fundamentalist or Anselmic doctrine and if for the first thousand years of Christianity no one recognized it.³⁴

Hordern also notes that Aulen's view has found wide acceptance among neo-orthodox thinkers because it combines the incarnation and the atonement.³⁵

The Atonement in Modern Thought

A generation ago, B. B. Warfield said:

Voices are raised all about us proclaiming a "theory" of the atonement impossible, while many of those that essay a "theory" seem to be feeling their tortuous way very much in the dark. That, if I mistake not, is the real state of affairs in the modern church.³⁶

If that darkness shrouded the theological discussion in Warfield's day, and he was presumably a qualified judge, his characterization is certainly no less true of the situation today.

It is sufficient for our present purpose to note several outstanding characteristics of the contemporary (i.e., post-reformation) discussion of the atonement.

First, let it be noted that the noncommittal attitude to which Warfield made reference is still with us. William Hordern, in his popular handbook, A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology, candidly admits this:

Whereas fundamentalism makes the Atonement central, modern orthodoxy³⁷ tends to make the Incarnation central. Fundamentalism is committed to one view of atonement--the substitutionary death of Christ for the sins of man. Modern orthodoxy is, in line with historic Christianity, hesitant to make any doctrine of atonement final. The result is that the death of Jesus is of central importance for fundamentalism, while modern orthodoxy, like liberalism, looks to the whole life of Jesus. In particular, modern orthodoxy emphasizes that the Resurrection of Jesus cannot be separated from his atoning work.³⁸

An Objective theory: Sine Qua Non.--One of the striking characteristics of this area of thought in our own day is the quest for a satisfactory objective theory. Objective, that is, except for the "morally objectionable" penal and substitutionary elements of traditional orthodox theology.³⁹ Leon Morris, of Ridley College in Melbourne, Australia, has pointed out this characteristic in a splendid article in HIS magazine. He writes:

Marked dissatisfaction with purely moral theories of the atonement has been evident in recent years, and very few (if any) front rank theologians put forth such views nowadays. This does not mean that any unanimity of opinion exists, but it does mean that men are feeling for some theory which will be objective, and yet will not outrage the ideas of our day.⁴⁰

Morris explains that the most popular view is one or another variation of the representative theory. That is, Christ was not our substitute nor was his death a sacrifice as such but he did do something that serves as a basis for reconciliation.

He was not separate from sinners in His suffering, but dying in their name, dying for their sake, dying in a way which avails for them.⁴¹

In his important work, God Was in Christ, C. M. Baillie struggles with the problem of defining a theory which is objective and yet avoids the notions of sacrifice, substitution, and propitiation. He denies that Christ's death was a true sacrifice at all--though Old Testament sacrificial terms are used to describe it.⁴² The New Testament expression hilasmos has nothing to do with appeasing an angry God, "For the love of God is the starting place."⁴³

In fact, the Old Testament sacrificial terminology is completely transformed by the usage of the New Testament.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, he insists that God did something objective and costly in Christ to make reconciliation possible. The objective element, that which is "Ordained" and accepted by God, in 'expiation' of human sin, quite apart from our knowledge of it," is the sacrifice which God is continually making of himself and to himself by suffering on account of sin.

. . . He is infinite Love confronted with human sin. And it is an expiatory sacrifice, because sin is a dreadfully real thing which love cannot tolerate or lightly pass over, and it is only out of the suffering of such inexorable love that true forgiveness, as distinct from an indulgent amnesty, could ever come.⁴⁵

Aulen, too, as we have noted,⁴⁶ although he denies the "commercial" view does set forth an objective theory.

Christ--Christus Victor--fights against and triumphs over the evil powers of the world, the 'tyrants'⁴⁷ under which mankind is in bondage and suffering, and in Him God reconciles the world to himself.⁴⁸

In short, modern theologians have come to recognize that an objective theory is the *conditio sine qua non* of any atonement theory that purports to be Biblical.

Christ's death as a sacrifice.--Another significant feature of recent Christological thought is the recognition of Christ's death as a sacrifice. Oliver Quick, C. H. Dodd, Vincent Taylor, and A. M. Hunter have given support to this view. The death of Christ is regarded as the fulfillment of Isaiah 53. Christ died vicariously in the interests of sinful men and forgiveness is mediated through his sacrifice.⁴⁹

Wm. Hordem, in the work cited above, says in reply to Abelard: "Christ's death can only be a revelation of God's love for man if it was a necessary sacrifice. It is meaningless if man could be saved without it."⁵⁰ His own view of Christianity is:

Whereas most religions believe that man has to do something to atone to God, Christianity teaches that God himself performed the atoning work. Other

religions perform sacrifices in order that God might turn his angry face back toward man and forgive him. Christianity teaches that God has performed a sacrifice, in and through Jesus, which has brought God and man back into fellowship with each other.⁵¹

By and large, however, the theologians of our own day who use the terminology of Old Testament sacrifice in speaking of the death of Christ do not mean that Christ's death was a sacrifice in that sense. Rather, sacrifice is distinguished as to (1) Sacrifice as a sacrificial gift, a votive offering. Man offers something of his own property as a sacrifice on the altar of his deity. (2) Man's offering of obedience, justice and righteousness, mercy and love.

This is the ethical way of sacrifice. This was the essence of the prophetic message in the Old Testament. And (3) the sacrifice of a broken spirit--the offering, that is, of the man himself in humility. This is the religious way of sacrifice.⁵²

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ, however, is of wholly different character. "It is God's own sacrifice."⁵³ The sacrifice of Christ is both God's own act of sacrifice and also a sacrifice offered to God.⁵⁴ Aulen insists that the Anselmic view "develops the latter aspect, and eliminates the former."⁵⁵

The immorality of substitution--Despite any concessions that theologians have made toward a truly Biblical Christology, on one point there is no change. The idea of substitution, of vicarious punishment, is immoral! I call to witness three voices from the past, not because things have changed, but because the attitude was formerly expressed more candidly (or crudely) than now. The most cursory perusal of contemporary literature will reveal that the attitude on this point, though expressed with greater refinement, remains unchanged.

Abelard:

Indeed, how cruel and wicked it seems that anyone should demand the blood of an innocent person as the price for anything, or that it should in any way please him that an innocent man should be slain--still less that God should consider the death of his Son so agreeable that by it he should be reconciled to the whole world!⁵⁶

P. T. Forsyth:

Does God's judgment mean exacting the utmost farthing or suffering? Does it mean that in the hour of his death Christ suffered, compressed into one brief moment, all the pains of hell that the human race deserved? We cannot think about things in that way. God does not work by such equivalents. Let us get rid of that materialistic idea of equivalents. What Christ gave to God was not an equivalent penalty, but an adequate confession of God's holiness, rising from amid extreme conditions of sin.⁵⁷

Horace Bushnell:

On the whole this matter of contrived compensation to justice which so many take for a gospel, appears to contain about the worst reflexion upon

God's justice that could be stated. . . The justice satisfied is satisfied with an injustice The penalties threatened, as against wrongdoers are not to be executed on them, because they have been executed on a right-doer! viz., Christ.⁵⁸

Vicarious punishment on our level would, of course, be a serious miscarriage of justice and indeed immoral. The death of Christ, however, is not strictly analogous to the case of a human judge punishing an innocent third party in the stead of a condemned criminal. At least the analogy dare not be pressed. In the case of Christ's sacrifice there is only one party beside the condemned. He is, "Judge, Wronged Party, King (or Law), and Substitute."⁵⁹ The case is wholly unique and the same Bible which declares it so to be also declares the impossibility of any other substitutionary atonement apart from this.⁶⁰

The Relevancy of the Atonement for the Interpretation of Genesis 22

As a result of this inquiry into the problem of human sacrifice certain key factors emerge as guidelines for the interpretation of Genesis 22. Nor do we lack for New Testament warrant in drawing such an analogy. Paul certainly alluded to Abraham's experience in Romans 8:32 where he writes of Christ's sacrifice: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. . . "⁶¹

(1) The Biblical record certainly represents Christ's death as a sacrifice and the orthodox Christian community has recognized it as such. Inasmuch as Jesus Christ was indeed the Son of Man, his death is a human sacrifice.

(2) Those who deny that the New Testament use of sacrificial terminology has reference to the Levitical offerings do so on the basis of a distorted concept of the idea of sacrifice.

This distorted concept is in turn due to the gratuitous assumption of the evolutionary development of the institutions of Israel's religion.

(3) To speak of the immorality of God's acting in any particular way is an exhibition of pride which elevates the judgment of man above that of God. Such evaluations make man the standard of universal morality and thereby reveal a wholly inadequate concept of ethics. Man is the measure of all things.

(4) To insist that God could not have demanded the sacrifice of Isaac on moral grounds would lend support to the view that God could not have demanded the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the same reason. Contrariwise, if the death of Jesus Christ is a true sacrifice, what ground is left for denying the possibility of God's demanding the sacrifice of Isaac?⁶²

(5) The fact that Isaac was not put to death in no way alters the analogy for from the viewpoint of both Abraham and God he was already sacrificed⁶³ and his coming down from the altar was tantamount to a resurrection from the dead. This was the focal point of Abraham's test: He believed that God would raise the son of promise from the dead.⁶⁴

THE NATURE OF THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC

In light of these considerations we proceed to several lines of argument which support the traditional view that Abraham was instructed and expected to offer Isaac as a whole burnt offering in the usual manner of such sacrifice.

The Divine Origin of the Command

The text of Genesis 22:1 clearly reads: "And Elohim tested Abraham" (translation and underlining are mine). The serious exegete cannot escape the fact that this text teaches the divine origin of the idea for this sacrifice without resorting to a most subjective hermeneutics. By way of contrast, modern interpreters, who do not feel duty bound to protect the reputation of Abraham (or for that matter, of Abraham's God), tend to attribute the idea to Abraham himself. The suggestion that Abraham was only acting in accordance with the custom of his day is quite popular.

Here in the story of Abraham and Isaac there is embedded the fact that once men not only practiced human sacrifice, but did it at what they thought was divine command.

If men worshipping pagan deities could carry their religion to that terrific cost, how could Abraham show that his religion meant as much to him? Only by being willing to go as far as he did.⁶⁵

In primitive Israelitish religion every first-born male was regarded as the property of Yahweh. . . The story of the sacrifice of Isaac is almost certainly reminiscent of a progress from barbarism to enlightenment.⁶⁶

We regard as highly improbable the notion that Abraham became aware of this command through the ordinary action of his conscience. Isaac was a miraculous child of divine promise. On him rested the only hope of divine blessing for Abraham and all mankind. He was the sole channel for the ultimate bestowal of eternal salvation. He was therefore to Abraham the charter of his salvation. That Abraham would have himself conceived the idea for Isaac's sacrifice is too great a strain on one's imagination.

The Terms of the Command

Abraham was instructed to "offer him there for a burnt-offering." The verb 'alah' means to go up, or ascend; in the hiphil, to cause to go up, and therefore, with respect to sacrifices, to offer. The 'olah' is the whole burnt-offering. It goes up in the flame of the altar to God expressing the ascent of the soul in worship. The 'olah' is a particular type of sacrifice.

It was the sacrifice that was completely consumed by the fire on the altar. It is significant that the sacrifice of Isaac is not called a minhah (a gift, present, or offering), a more general term that would have more suitably described a so-called "spiritual sacrifice" had that been intended. Neither is it called a zebah, the general name for sacrifices eaten at the feasts. It is not a hata't nor an asam or trespass offering. The sacrifice of Isaac was not intended as a sacrifice for sin. It was an expression of Abraham's own worship and de

votion to Yahweh. In light of the universal usage of 'olah' for a sacrifice that is wholly consumed by fire, it is only reasonable to expect some qualifying phrase if this were not the actual intent.

New Testament Evidence

By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac: yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; even he to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a figure receive him back (Heb. 11:17-19).

Was not Abraham our father justified by works in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? (Jas. 2:21)⁶⁷

From these texts as well as from Gen. 22:12, "For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me," we learn that from the standpoint of both Abraham and God the sacrifice of Isaac was complete. Abraham had gone far enough that there was no question or doubt that he would complete the sacrifice. God was satisfied. Abraham was so sure of Isaac's death that his coming down from the altar was tantamount to a resurrection from the dead. It is therefore a figure or type of Christ's death and resurrection for, auton kai en parabolai ekomisato. This argument is also sustained by the use of the perfect tense of prosphero in Hebrews 11:17. Pistei prosenanochen Abraam ton Isaak peirazomenos.

Analogy to the Sacrificial Death of Christ

We have endeavored in this study to point out the analogous relationship between the sacrifice of Isaac and the death of Christ as a sacrifice. No interpretation of Genesis 22 can be adequate that fails to consider the Christological and soteriological implications thus involved. An analogy, however, does not bear an exact correspondence to the reality in every detail, else it would cease to be an analogy and become an exact equivalent to the reality.

The sacrifice of Isaac corresponds to "that of Christ in the following respects: (1) They are in both cases the sacrifice by a father of his only son. (2) They both symbolize a complete dedication on the part of the offerer. And (3) they are in both cases a human sacrifice.

On the other hand, no single sacrifice in the Old Testament was sufficient in itself to fully typify the ultimate sacrifice of Christ. Only by a composite view of all the different offerings is Christ's death adequately pictured. The sacrifice of Isaac could never have pictured the most essential idea in the sacrifice of Christ, namely, substitution. Isaac was not an adequate substitute. It is doubtless for this reason that the hand of Abraham was stayed and another "parable" introduced, for the substitution of a ram in the stead of Isaac is certainly an adequate type of a substitute ransom. It is perhaps the clearest illustration of substitution in the whole Old Testament. Thus the two sacrifices taken together complement each other in their respective representation of the death of Christ. The sacrifice of Isaac.

has the merit of adding that dimension which is lacking in all other Old Testament sacrifices, that God's own sacrifice would be a human sacrifice, and beyond that, the Son of the Offerer Himself.

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2. R. A. S. Macalister, "Human Sacrifice: Semitic," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings, VI, 863. This seal is described in detail by Macalister in this article. For another such seal see: The Jewish Encyclopedia, VIII, 653.
3. A. H. Sayce, Patriarchal Palestine (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1895), p. 183.
4. According to Albright, "The extent to which human sacrifice was practiced among the Canaanites has not been clarified by the discoveries at Ugarit, which nowhere appear to mention it at all." W. F. Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1942), p. 93.
5. W. F. Albright, "Recent Discoveries in Bible Lands," Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955), p. 34.
6. The burden of this paper is to demonstrate that human sacrifice per se is an amoral act. Its acquired morality is dependent on the command or prohibition of God.
7. The chief texts are: Lev. 18:21; 20:1-5; Deut. 12:31; 18:10.
8. The chief texts are: Jer. 7:31, 19:1-13; 32:35; Isa. 57:5; Ezek. 20:31; 23:37.
9. Exod. 20:3. Paul Tillich has accurately observed that the "greater the act of faith or worship offered to an idol, the greater the abomination to the True God. Dynamics of Faith (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957), pp. 11ff.
10. The Biblical material is found in: Exod. 13:1-16; 22:29; 34:20. On the redemption of the first-born by the substitution of the Levites and the payment of five shekels, see: Num. 3:40-51; 18:15ff.
11. A. H. Sayce, The Early History of the Hebrews (London: Rivingtons, 1897), p. 51.
12. Ibid., p. 47.
13. In order to avoid the extreme of hyper-Calvinism, the whole matter of divine election must be viewed in this light. It is not that God elects some men to salvation and some to perdition; but that of all men, already doomed, God has graciously chosen to sovereignly elect some to the joys of salvation.
14. Parallel ideas are expressed in the following texts from the Prophets: Amos 5:21-24; Isa. 1:11; Jer. 6:20; and Mic. 6:6-8.
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16. John Peter Lange, Genesis, trans. and ed. A. Gosman, Commentary on the Holy Scripture ed. J. P. Lange, trans. and ed. Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing house, n. d.), p. 80. Italics mine.
17. Hobart E. Freeman, "The Doctrine of Substitution in the Old Testament" (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Ind., 1961), p. 103.
18. Ibid., p. 96.
19. For a thorough treatment of this idea, see "The Problem of the Efficacy of the Old Testament Sacrifices," Hobart Freeman, op. cit., pp. 335-358.

20. Henry Bettenson (ed.), Documents of the Christian Church (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 43.
21. Ibid., p. 42.
22. This of course has not been the case inasmuch as recent neo-orthodox theologians have returned to the "classic" or early church view.
23. Robert S. Paul, The Atonement and the Sacraments (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), p.68.
24. Both the ransom theory and the commercial theory are "objective" in that they describe an effect secured apart from man which serves as the basis for his reconciliation. "Subjective" theories emphasize the work of Christ in and for the believer.
25. Pelagius denied that man inherited either guilt or a sin-nature from Adam. Every man is as free as Adam. Some men sin: others never do. As Adam was a bad example to influence men to sin, so Christ is a good example to influence men to holiness.
26. Earle E. Cairns, Christianity Through the Centuries (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), p. 256.
27. Cited by Paul, op. cit., p. 82.
28. Kenneth S. Kantzer, Unpublished notes on the Philosophy of Religion (Wheaton College, 1958).
29. Ibid.
30. B. B. Warfield, The Person and Work of Christ, ed. S. G. Craig (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1950), p. 379.
31. Advocates of this view distinguish retributive justice from public justice. Christ's death satisfies the demands of public justice only. For this reason we judge that the governmental theory really reduces to another variation of the moral influence theory. There is no objective ground for God's forgiving of any particular sin.
32. Gustaf Aulen, Christus Victor (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961), passim.
33. Gustaf Aulen, "Chaos and Cosmos: The Drama of the Atonement," Interpretation, IV (April, 1950), p. 156. Obviously, we do not deny that this was a part of Christ's work. For a conservative statement of this aspect see: Wendell E. Kent, "The Spoiling of Principalities and Powers," Grace Journal, III (Winter, 1962), p. 8.
34. William Hordern, A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1958), p. 203. In reply it should be noted that before the corruption of the Church began under Constantine, theological discussion was largely concerned with the basic issues of the Scriptures, the nature of the Trinity, and the person of Christ. It is no more surprising that the early church had no technical statement of the Atonement than that it had no precise ecclesiology or eschatology.
35. Ibid. That is, because it differs from the subjective view of liberalism, which neo-Orthodoxy regards as bad, and also from the objective view of fundamentalism, which neo-orthodoxy regards as impossible!
36. Warfield, op. cit., pp. 376-77.
37. That is, what we more commonly call "neo-orthodoxy."
38. Hordern, loc. cit. How interesting that the delay of the church in addressing itself to the problem of the atonement is sufficient warrant to declare that no doctrine of the atonement is final. But the same author has no qualms about denying the truth of propositional revelation--a truth on which the church has spoken and spoken clearly. p.188.
39. Samuel J. Mikolaski, "The Atonement and Men Today," Christianity Today, V (March 13,

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40. Leon Morris, "Penal View of the Atonement and Men Today," Christianity Today, V December, 1960), 33.
 41. Ibid.
 42. D. M. Baillie, God Was in Christ (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 177.
 43. Ibid., p. 187.
 44. Ibid., p. 175, et passim.
 45. Ibid., p. 198.
 46. See the discussion of Aulen's atonement theory, above.
 47. That is, sin, death, and Satan.
 48. Aulen, Christus Victor, p. 4.
 49. Mikolaski, op. cit., p. 3.
 50. Hordern, op. cit., p. 34.
 51. Ibid.
 52. Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, trans. Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), pp. 120-21.
 53. Ibid., p. 122.
 54. Aulen, Christus Victor, p. 77.
 55. Ibid.
 56. Cited by Paul, op. cit., p. 81.
 57. Ibid., p. 236.
 58. Ibid., p. 152.
 59. H. E. Guillebaud, Why the Cross? (London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, reprtd., 1956), p. 147.
 60. Ibid., p. 148.
 61. The Greek expression ouk epheisato (spared not) is the same as the LXX translation in Gen. 22:16 which reads: ouk epheiso tou huriou sou tou agapatou di' eme. The form is aorist middle (deponent) from pheioomai: third person, singular, in Rom. 8; second person, singular, in Gen. 22.
 62. This is not to say that the proposed sacrifice of Isaac was in any sense substitutionary or piacular in nature. In this respect Jesus' death is wholly unique.
 63. Cf. Gen. 22:12, 16; Heb. 11:17; and Jas. 2:21.
 64. Heb. 11:17
 65. Walter Russell Bowie, Genesis, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1952), I. 642, 644.
 66. C. R. North, "The Redeemer God, "Interpretation, II, (Jan. 1948), p. 5.
 67. On the supposed conflict between James and Paul over the justification of Abraham by faith or works, see G. C. Berkouwer, Faith and Justification, trans. Lewis B. Smedes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954), pp. 134-139.

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Looking for Abraham's City

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Hebrews 11:9-10 describes the life of Abraham in the following way: "By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God."

In alluding to the Old Testament portrayal of Abraham, these verses raise intriguing questions. On what textual basis is Abraham regarded as looking for the city of God? Does this concept find its roots in the biblical record, or has it been imported from some other source? How did the patriarch come to be viewed as a pilgrim?

Though the complete answer to these questions would require a comprehensive examination of all the relevant biblical and extra-biblical Jewish texts, this article is limited to a survey of several key passages in Genesis that may contain potential for significant metaphorical development into the pilgrim imagery of Hebrews 11. It is argued that the presentation of Abraham in Hebrews 11:9-10 may to a large degree be explained as an extrapolation from the language and ordering of the references to Abraham in Genesis.

The Language of the Genesis Texts

GENESIS 12:1-9

Though Abraham is first mentioned in Genesis 11:26-32, it is with Genesis 12 that a new section in the divine program of salvation begins. If Abraham lived in the late third millennium or early second millennium B.C.,¹ as the biblical record purports, his migration

¹ M. H. Segal notes, "Life in Mesopotamia in the second millennium must have been

would outwardly have been indistinguishable from that of many people who were migrating at that time.² The biblical story, however, begins with a directive from God, which differentiates Abraham's journey from that of his contemporaries.³ The selection of details included in the narrative manifests a clear theological interest. Thus, to seek to limit his travels to what can be geographically traced and sociologically explained fails to give full weight to the specific call by Yahweh that introduces the biblical portrayal of Abraham's trip to Canaan and his subsequent life there. As Speiser remarks, "Abraham's journey to the Promised Land was thus no routine expedition of several hundred miles. Instead, it was the start of an epic voyage in search of spiritual truths, a quest that was to constitute the central theme of all biblical history."⁴ The narrative manifests the unusual nature of Abraham's movement to Canaan.

The story of Abraham begins with a promise that introduces the patriarchal age. Abraham's journey begins simply as a response to the word of God. In fact the original command in 12:1 makes no mention of the identity of the land, nor even that the land was to be given to him.⁵ God's promises in verses 2-3, reiterated and enlarged to the patriarchs throughout the Genesis narratives, became the theological nexus for much of the Old Testament literature.⁶

intolerable to a believer in the One God. The whole life of society and of the individual was strictly regulated on the principles of a crass polytheism and demonology, governed by a multitude of priests, diviners and magicians under the rule of the great temples and their hierarchies. There was no room in that Mesopotamia for an individual who could not join in the worship and in the magical practices of his fellows. Abraham must have felt early the pressing need to remove himself from such a stifling environment" (*The Pentateuch: Its Composition and Its Authorship and Other Biblical Studies* [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967], p. 128).

² H. Wansbrough, "Abraham Our Father," *Clergy Review* 52 (1967): 661; cf. H. Gunkel, *The Legends of Genesis: The Biblical Saga and History* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), p. 137, who argues that the patriarchal legends were originally composed by 1200 B.C. This provenance, however, is challenged by J. Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975) and T. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1974).

³ M. Eliade notes, "But the religious conception implicit in the 'election' of Abraham continues beliefs and customs well known in the Near East of the second millennium. What distinguishes the biblical narrative is God's personal message and its consequences. Without being first invoked, God reveals himself to a human being and after laying a series of injunctions on him, makes him a series of prodigious promises" (*A History of Religious Ideas*, 3 vols. [London: Collins, 1979], 1:171).

⁴ E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1964), p. 88.

⁵ Nahum M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), pp. 101-2. The uncertainty is reflected by the Septuagint ἦν ἄν σοι δείξω.

⁶ R. E. Clements, *Abraham and David: Genesis XV and Its Meaning for Israelite Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 1967), p. 57.

The divine word of command, לֵךְ-אַתָּה , calls Abram to an abrupt and cataclysmic change in location and pattern of life. The call was to go from (מִן) his most fundamental loyalties to (לֵךְ) a destination that is indicated in the vaguest of terms. In essence, Yahweh was requiring Abram to obey, knowing the full price involved, but with only a hint as to the compensation. The divine demand was that Abram should forsake the familiar for the foreign.⁷

It is evident from Genesis 11 that Abram was a member of an intimate family structure. His homeland of Ur had a highly developed culture, far superior to that of Canaan.⁸ Thus Abram did not migrate to Canaan in search of a settled home, but he was called to leave his "secure home and to exchange it for a very unsettled existence in the far-away and strange land of Canaan."⁹

The form of the divine command did little to mitigate the personal anguish involved in such a relocation. In three parallel prepositional phrases introduced by מִן , Abram's departure moves from the general (מֵאֶרֶץ "from your country") to the specific (מִבֵּית אָבִי "from your father's house") with ever-increasing personal identification."¹⁰

As Liebowitz points out, this sequence is contrary to what would be expected, for the logical sequence is that one first leaves his home, then his birthplace, and after that his country. She concurs with early Jewish commentators that what is being suggested by the passage is "a spiritual rather than physical withdrawal, beginning with the periphery and ending with the inner core."¹¹

God called Abram to go from Mesopotamia, and He also enjoined him to go "to the land which I will show you." Brueggemann maintains that "land is a central, if not the central theme of biblical faith. Biblical faith is a pursuit of historical belonging that includes a sense of destiny derived from such belonging."¹² Abram's re-

⁷ Cf. J. Muilenburg, "Abraham and the Nations," *Interpretation* 19 (1965): 391; James L. Mays, "God Has Spoken," *Interpretation* 14 (1960): 419.

⁸ Bruce Vawter succinctly traces the history and describes the culture of Ur-III (*On Genesis: A Neap Reading* [London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1977], p. 171).

⁹ J. B. Soucek, "Pilgrims and Sojourners," *Convunio Viatorinn* 1 (1958): 5.

¹⁰ A similar progression in intensity may be noted in the divine call in Genesis 22:2 for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. It may be significant that the command for the Agedah is also phrased לֵךְ-אַתָּה . As in 12:4 the command was followed by explicit, unquestioning obedience.

¹¹ N. Liebowitz, *Studies in Bereshit (Genesis)*, 2d rev. ed. (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, 1974), p. 113.

¹² W. Brueggemann, *The Land*, Overtures to Biblical Theology (London: SPCK, 1978), p. 3. The magisterial study by W. D. Davies traces the theme of the land throughout the biblical corpus (*The Gospel and the Land* [Berkeley: University of California, 1974]). Other useful studies include W. D. Davies, *The Territorial Dirnen-sion of Judaism* (Berkeley: University of California, 1982); G. Strecker, ed., *Das Land*

sponse to Yahweh's call and the divine promise of land, name, and blessing (vv. 2-3) set the tone both for the patriarchal history and for the rest of biblical literature.¹³

God's command in verse 1 was matched by the record in verse 4 of Abram's obedience. No mention is made of any objection, question, or delay.¹⁴ As the narrative stands, Abram is portrayed as explicitly obeying the word of God.¹⁵ Three items are noted in verse 4, all of which prove crucial in the larger narrative. The action is defined as being in accord with (כְּאֶשֶׁר) the word of Yahweh.¹⁶ The mention of Lot anticipates the theme of the problem of an heir, which is prevalent throughout the Abrahamic narratives.¹⁷ Abram's advanced age (then 75), along with the statement of Sarai's barrenness in 11:30, serves to accentuate the magnitude of his obedience in the face of scant human prospects.

Verse 5 makes particular the general description in the previous verse. The destination of the trip is stated proleptically by the narrator as Canaan, though in the account it was not disclosed as such to Abram until verse 7. The enumeration of those whom Abram took with him, from Sarai his wife to the purchased slaves ("the persons which they had acquired in Haran"),¹⁸ serves to highlight the rad-

Israel in biblischer Zeit, Gottingen Theologische Arbeiten 25 (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1983); Gerhard von Rad, "Verheissenes Land und Jahwes Land im Hexateuch," *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1958), pp. 87-100; and B. H. Amaru, "Land Theology in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 71 (1981): 201-29.

¹³ The eschatological portions of both Testaments resonate with these themes introduced in Genesis 12, as noted by W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (London: SCM Press, 1961, 1967), 1:476.

¹⁴ G. von Rad comments: "Abraham obeys blindly and without objection. The one word *wayyelek* ('and he set out') is more effective than any psychological description could be, and in its majestic simplicity does greater justice to the importance of this event" (*Genesis: A Commentary*, 3d rev. ed. [London: SCM Press, 1972], p. 161).

¹⁵ This point must not be pressed, however, for Hebrew narrative is characteristically laconic. The lack of detail is a chief provocation for midrash, such as detailed by L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1913-67), 1:205. But as H. Gunkel notes, the details that are presented are of special significance: "He does not share the modern point of view, that the most interesting and worthy theme for art is the soul-life of man; his child-like taste is fondest of the outward, objective facts. And in this line his achievements are excellent. He has an extraordinary faculty for selecting just the action which is most characteristic for the state of feeling of his hero" (*The Legends of Genesis*, p. 61).

¹⁶ Cf. E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. A. E. Cowley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), par. 161h, and καθάπερ in the Septuagint.

¹⁷ L. R. Helyer demonstrates well that "the overall concern of the cycle is, Who will be Abraham's heir?" ("The Separation of Abram and Lot: Its Significance in the Patriarchal Narratives," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 26 [1983]: 85).

¹⁸ Jewish midrash viewed these individuals as proselytes whom Abram and Sarai had converted in Haran (*Gen. Rab.* 39.14).

ical relocation involved in Abram's decision of obedience. Nothing was left behind should the venture fail, but Abram followed the word of Yahweh without reserve into the unknown.

Verses 6-9 trace the initial travels of Abram within the land of Canaan, which Yahweh then gave to his offspring (v. 7). Abram is portrayed as moving through the land from Shechem (v. 6) to Bethel (v. 8) and eventually toward the Negev (v. 9). This progression can be viewed from several perspectives. Yeivin relates it to the political and economic necessities of seminomadism in the patriarchal times.¹⁹ Cassuto views the journeys throughout Canaan in light of God's land gift stated in verse 7. Comparing Abram's movements to the inaugural tour of Jacob later in Genesis, Cassuto says, "In the same way, Abram's passage across the land of Canaan from north to south represents the ideal transfer of the country to his possession for the purpose of the Lord's service. He was like a man who has acquired a field and inspects it from end to end."²⁰

It is evident that the narrator was setting the action within a theological context. The site at which the land promise was given is specified in three ways in verse 6. The name of the place was Shechem, a city in the heart of the land that later became a place of assembly for Israel (cf. Josh. 24:1).²¹ At this location was also the oak of Moreh, a center of pagan worship. Moreover, the Canaanites were in the land Yahweh was giving to Abram's seed (not to Abram himself), thus shifting actual possession of the land into the future. This juxtaposition of divine utterance and incomplete human awareness or appropriation parallels the call of Abram in verse 1 and demands the same quality of unquestioning obedience and trusting anticipation. Von Rad notes that "Abraham is therefore brought by God into a completely unexplained relationship with the Canaanites, and Yahweh does not hurry about solving and explaining this opaque status of ownership as one expects the director of history to do."²²

Throughout the pericope the narrator was careful to focus only on Abram's activities without discussing the motivation that

¹⁹ S. Yeivin, "The Patriarchs in the Land of Canaan," in *The World History of the Jewish People*, ed. Benjamin Mazar, 6 vols. (Tel Aviv: Massada, 1964-72), 2:201. Cf. Vawter, *On Genesis: A New Reading*, p. 178.

²⁰ Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961-64), 2:323.

²¹ M. A. Fishbane cites Genesis 28:18 and Judges 9:37 to support his contention that the sites of Shechem and Bethel, and Canaan in general, are viewed as a sacred center in Israel's traditions ("The Sacred Center: The Symbolic Structure of the Bible," in *Texts and Responses*, ed. M. A. Fishbane and P. R. Flohr [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975], p. 14)

²² Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, p. 166.

prompted them. However, the response of Abram to both God's call and His promise clearly indicates that his reason for migrating to Canaan was his dedication to Yahweh and His service.²³ This observation is supported by the structure of verses 7-8, in which Abram is described as building altars for Yahweh. In verse 7 the divine promise, "To your descendants I will give this land," is followed by the response, "So he built an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him." The physical activities in the first half of verse 8 are preparatory to the spiritual activities in the second half. Thus Abram manifested a spiritual motivation in settling at Bethel by building an altar to Yahweh and by calling on His name.²⁴

It may then be concluded that Genesis 12:1-9 contains substantial theological potential that could be developed into a pilgrim ideology.²⁵ Abram's unquestioning obedience to Yahweh's call and his response to the divine land grant to his offspring manifest a significant perspective dimension in the narrative. Though presented as sober history, transcending the literal level of the action is the presentation of a man who heeded the word of Yahweh to leave all that was familiar to venture out to an unspecified location, which later was given not to him but to his descendants. To this command Abram responded in obedience and worship.

GENESIS 17:1

The divine command, "Walk before Me, and be blameless" (וְהָיָה לְפָנַי וְהָיָה תָמִים), bears unmistakable theological overtones. Von Rad notes that what is being commanded is Abram's complete, unqualified surrender of his life to God.²⁶ It may thus be said that

²³ Cassuto points out that "what the Bible does not say expressly it indicates by inference. It is a characteristic of these narratives ... not to describe the thoughts and feelings of the *dramatis personae*, but only to record their deeds, and to inform the reader through the narration of events of the ideas and sentiments that prompted their actions" (*A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, 2:303).

²⁴ This is reflected in Jewish tradition, as summarized by L. Ginzberg. "Each altar raised by him was a centre for his activities as a missionary. As soon as he came to a place in which he desired to sojourn, he would stretch a tent first for Sarah, and next for himself, and then he would proceed at once to make proselytes and bring them under the wings of the Shekinah. Thus he accomplished his purpose of inducing all men to proclaim the name of God" (*The Legends of the Jews*, 1:219).

²⁵ Interpretive development in a metaphorical direction is evident in Philo De Migr. Abr.

²⁶ Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, pp. 198-99, and supported by Aquila's τέλειος for תָּמִים. Thus Jubilees 23:10 reads, "For Abraham was perfect in all his actions with the Lord and was pleasing through righteousness all the days of his life." Cf. Zadokite Fragments 7.5 and Philo *Quaest. et Sol. in Gen.* III 40, who stated that "a character which pleases God does not incur blame, while one who is blameless and faultless in all things is altogether pleasing [to God]." This reading is also followed by Jerome *Against the Pelagians* 3.12.

תָּמִים is the reality of which הַתְּמִלָּה is the figure. It should be noted, however, that much Jewish translation and exegesis renders תָּמִים in relation to the subsequent circumcision of Abraham.²⁷

In the highly covenantal language of the passage,²⁸ God promised Abraham (his name was changed in 17:5), "And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings [אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ], all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (v. 8). As in 12:7 the land would be possessed not by Abraham but only by his descendants. For Abraham, Canaan would be only a land of sojournings, not a possessed home. Thus as Klein points out, it is "recognized that the patriarchs never really occupied the land as owners."²⁹

Moreover, the evident allusion to Enoch (Gen. 5:22, 24) and Noah (6:9) must be accounted for. As Enoch had walked with God and had been translated from his society into the divine presence, and as Noah had walked with God and been delivered from divine judgment on his sinful culture, so Abraham was commanded to walk before God. It is recognizable then that Abraham was being called to a relationship with God that by its very orientation would cause him to be differentiated from his human society.

GENESIS 23:4

Genesis 23³⁰ is crucial³¹ for understanding the socio-political concept of Abraham the sojourner and the background of the later metaphorical concept of spiritual pilgrimage. The occasion for the transaction here recorded is Sarah's death. Though God had promised Abraham the entire land of Canaan, the patriarch had not yet come into possession of even enough ground for a burial site for his wife.

The legal setting of the pericope in which "preoccupation with the problem of ownership determines every stage, every detail of

²⁷ Cf. *Gen. Rab.* 46.4; *Tg. Ps.-J.*; *Tg. Neof.*; b. Ned. 31b-32a; y. Ned. 3.11; t. Ned. 2.5.

²⁸ Cf. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. C. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974), s.v. אֶבְרָהָם, by Ronald E. Clements, 1:58.

²⁹ R. W. Klein, *Israel in Exile: A Theological Interpretation*, Overtures to Biblical Theology (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p. 137.

³⁰ H. Hahn gives a useful discussion of the interpretation of Genesis 23 in the later rabbinic literature (*Wallfahrt und Auferstehung zur messianischen Zeit: Eine rabbinische Homilie zum Neumond-Sabbat (Pes R 1)*, Frankfurter Judaistische Studien 5 [Frankfurt am Main, 1979], pp. 156-70).

³¹ Thus J. G. Vink says of Genesis 23, "The text is important for ... because it tells about the *primitiae* of the possession of the land and the beginning of the fulfilment of the divine promise" ("The Date and Origin of the Priestly Code in the Old Testament," *Old Testament Studies* 15 [1969]: 91).

the negotiation,"³² is determinative for Abraham's self-description, "I am a stranger and a sojourner among you" (23:4). The issue involved more than mere title to a plot of land. At stake is "whether Abraham was to gain a permanent foothold or not"³³ in Canaanite society.

When read in isolation, Genesis 23 fits comfortably in the legal or commercial domain. However, in its literary context in the Abrahamic narratives and in the biblical corpus, theological implications emerge. As Coats remarks, "the unit itself draws no theological consequence from the acquisition,"³⁴ but when seen in the light of the reiterated land promise to Abraham, the purchase of even a burial site becomes the earnest of the ultimate fulfillment.³⁵ The positioning of this transaction between the sacrifice of his heir in chapter 22 and the securing of a wife for Isaac (thus providing for the perpetuation of the covenant family) in chapter 24 hints at the prospective nature of Abraham's purchase. Nevertheless to posit an explicit metaphorical meaning to גֵּר וְתוֹשֵׁב exceeds the dimensions of this context.

The Ordering of the Genesis Texts

This section examines the relationship of Genesis 12-25, particularly 12:1-3, to the primeval narratives in Genesis 1-11. The literary arrangement will be analyzed to determine to what extent later Jewish and Christian writers may have derived the metaphorical concept of pilgrimage from the ordering of the narratives in Genesis.

³² J. Licht, *Storytelling in the Bible* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1978), p. 22. Cf. M. R. Lehmann, who relates the incident to Hittite laws regarding feudal obligation ("Abraham's Purchase of Machpelah and Hittite Law," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 129 [1953]: 15-18) and G. M. Tucker, who details the parallels between the transaction in Genesis 23 and a wide range of Near Eastern legal forms, in particular, the Neo-Babylonian dialogue documents ("The Legal Background of Genesis 23," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 85 [1966]: 77-84). Van Seters argues that the suggested parallels with Old Babylonian contracts point only to the continuity of legal procedures over a long time (*Abraham in History and Tradition*, pp. 99-100). He agrees with Tucker that Genesis 23 follows completely the model of the sale contracts of the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid periods.

³³ Derek Kidner, *Genesis*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Chicago: InterVarsity Press, 1967), p. 145.

³⁴ G. W. Coats, *Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983), p. 164.

³⁵ Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, p. 250. Cf. R. Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 101, and Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (London: SCM Press, 1985), p. 219. M. R. Hauge seems to take the theological implication a step too far when he asserts that "corresponding to Canaan developed as the land of Estrangement, the Promised Land as the land of the Grave expresses a definite reinterpretation of the traditional land motif" ("The Struggles of the Blessed in Estrangement," *Studia Theologica* 29 [1975]: part 2, p. 140).

Several factors justify the examination of the traditional text as a legitimate focus in biblical study: (1) It is the only objectively available text, in contrast with the speculative reconstructions of source criticism.³⁶ (2) The accepted text is the corpus which shaped later tradition in Judaism and Christianity.³⁷ (3) The juxtaposition of accounts can produce "unexpected narrative connections and theological insights" so that the literary whole is a sum greater than its parts.³⁸ Indeed, these collocations bear evidence of logical³⁹ or theological⁴⁰ intention. (4) The relevance of the synthetic approach is confirmed by Jewish midrashic exegesis, which seeks to explain the juxtaposition of texts.⁴¹ Thus the conclusion by Sawyer is apposite:

The original meaning of the final form of the text is a concept which not only permits fruitful study of a clearly defined corpus of lexical data, but also provides an obvious starting-point for theological discussion, since it was the final form of the text, not its separate component parts,

³⁶ James Barr, *The Bible in the Modern World* (London: SCM Press, 1973), pp. 163-64. R. Smend, in assessing the work of Childs, states, "Generations of scholars have seen their primary task as the reconstruction of the oldest written texts and, as far as possible, the oral forms that preceded them. The further such work continues, the greater the danger of its becoming speculation. So it is not only understandable, but also appropriate, if the focus of analysis is now, by way of reaction, the end of the process of tradition, i.e., the final written form of the material. This is not only a neglected and hence a fertile field, but also a more certain one, since the finalised texts are not imaginary entities. Here we are less under the influence of speculations, but can make observations on material that clearly lies before us, and are often also in a position to prove and disprove" ("Questions about the Importance of the Canon in an Old Testament Introduction," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 16 [1980]: 45-46).

³⁷ Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (London: SCM Press, 1979), pp. 76-77.

³⁸ M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1948), pp. 269-70; cf. B. W. Anderson, "The New Frontier of Rhetorical Criticism," in *Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. J. J. Jackson and M. Kessler, Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series I (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974), p. xvii.

³⁹ M. H. Segal, "The Composition of the Pentateuch: A Fresh Examination," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 8 (1961): 95. However, R. N. Whybray issues a salutary caution: "While there is undoubtedly a continuous narrative thread, this is often extremely thin, and the various incidents described are frequently joined together only very loosely" (*The Making of the Pentateuch* [Sheffield: University of Sheffield Press, 1987], p. 14). One then must be cautious in interpreting the juxtapositions of the extant text as deliberate collocations intended to teach explicit principles.

⁴⁰ G. M. Landes, "The Canonical Approach to Introducing the Old Testament: Prodigy and Problems," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 16 (1980): 33; and R. Rendtorff, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (London: SCM Press, 1985), p. 290.

⁴¹ M. Wadsworth, "Making and Interpreting Scripture," in *Ways of Reading the Bible*, ed. M. Wadsworth (Sussex: Harvester, 1981), p. 10. He goes on to state concerning Genesis: "There are narrative connections in the story from chapter 10 through 12 which an inordinate reliance on the J or P writers as self-contained, autonomous chroniclers has tended to obscure" (*ibid.*, p. 11). Cf. R. Rendtorff, "Rabbinic Exegesis and the Modern Christian Bible Scholar," *Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1983), pp. 35-36.

that was canonized in all the religious communities for which it is an authoritative religious text.⁴²

LITERARY INTEGRATION IN GENESIS 11-12

Though a division between the primeval history (Gen. 1-11) and the patriarchal history (Gen. 12-50) has often been made, a careful reading of Genesis 11-12 reveals a significant degree of continuity between the two sections. To be sure, Abram was called to a new phase of life in 12:1, but he and his family are introduced in chapter 11. The elaborate transitional passage in 11:10-32 compels the reader of the canonical text⁴³ to view the patriarchal history in some relationship with the primeval history.⁴⁴ Von Rad explains this conjunction in terms of aetiology, in that the meaning of the call of Abram is expounded in the primeval history. He concludes, "Indeed, because of this welding of primeval history and saving history, the whole of Israel's saving history is properly to be understood with reference to the unsolved problem of Jahweh's relationship to the nations."⁴⁵

In the interpretive process the combination of Genesis 1-11 and Genesis 12 has a sum greater than the constitutive parts.⁴⁶ Certain motifs present in both literary blocks are thus brought to the fore as key themes in the extant form.⁴⁷ By this juxtaposition, potential for interpretive correlations is created that might not have occurred to the reader had the individual passages remained as discrete units.

⁴² J. F. A. Sawyer, "The Meaning of *בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים* ('In the Image of God') in Genesis I-XI," *Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1974): 419. Though Sawyer's argument from canonical status is open to question (cf. L. G. Perdue, "Review of Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*," *Restoration Quarterly* 23 [1980]: 243-49, and J. Barton, *Reading the Old Testament* [London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1984], pp. 91, 96), his emphasis on the usefulness of studying the traditionally accepted text is salutary.

⁴³ The juxtaposition of Genesis 11 and 12 finds unanimous attestation in all the ancient sources, including the Masoretic Text, SP, Targums, and the Septuagint, and it can justifiably be maintained that the early Jewish and Christian writers would have had before them this arrangement of texts. Thus at least in this specific case, a canonical approach is warranted. J. M. Sasson argues well for the validity of both analytic and synthetic study of the biblical texts ("The 'Tower of Babel' as a Clue to the Redactional Structuring of the Primeval History [Gen. 1-11:9]," in *The Bible World*, ed. G. Rendsburg et al. [New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1980], p. 213).

⁴⁴ D. J. A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch* (Sheffield: University of Sheffield Press, 1978), pp. 77-78.

⁴⁵ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Row, 1962-1965), 1:164.

⁴⁶ The interpretive potential latent in the literary arrangement of Pentateuchal texts is frequently exploited by the Targums, as *Targum du Pentateuque* notes with numerous examples (ed. R. le Deaut, SC 240 [Paris: Cerf, 1978], pp. 54-55).

⁴⁷ Brevard S. Childs, "The Exegetical Significance of Canon for the Study of the Old Testament," *Congress Volume: Göttingen, 1977*, *Vetus Testamentum Supplements*, vol. 29 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), p. 69.

GENESIS 12:1-3 AS A RESPONSE TO GENESIS 1-11

It is evident from the divine call to Abram in Genesis 12:1 that the focus has narrowed from the more universal scope of chapters 1-11. The primeval narratives trace the spiritual degeneration of the human race as a whole by means of the recurrent pattern of human sin and divine punishment.⁴⁸ But the story of Abraham also has a universal dimension, for the ultimate result of the blessing on the patriarch is that all families of the earth will be blessed (12:3),⁴⁹ in essence a reformation of creation.⁵⁰ The positioning of Genesis 12 immediately after the primeval narratives suggests that "the election of Israel in some way must be the answer to the plight of man."⁵¹

The land promise in 12:7 is a reversal of the pattern of expulsion that dominates Genesis 3-11.⁵² Dispersion or homelessness is manifested in Adam and Eve's removal from Eden (3:23-24), the curse on Cain (4:16), and the scattering of Babel (11:8), but it is strikingly reversed in the divine call of Abram. As Fishbane suggests, Abram is in a sense a new Adam, in whom is hope for the renewal of human life in history.⁵³ Though Eden could not be regained by human means, divine grace to Abram gives the prospect of the restoration of the land, fertility, and blessing lost by the human parents.⁵⁴

The primeval narratives relate the tragic story of nearly unmit-

⁴⁸ R. L. Cohn, "Narrative Structure and Canonical Perspective in Genesis," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 25 (1983): 4.

⁴⁹ R. Martin-Achard states, "Gen. XII.3 has universalistic implications. The Patriarch is the instrument by which Yahweh is seeking to save all mankind. His promise to Abraham is the answer to the curse of the dispersion of the human race (Gen. XI.7ff.) and determines the whole destiny of Israel and the world; henceforth history is going to unfold under the sign of that blessing which is offered to all peoples through Abraham and his descendants" (*A Light to the Nations* [London: Oliver and Boyd, 1962], p. 36).

⁵⁰ Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis, Interpretation* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), pp. 105-6. O. H. Steck sees Genesis 12:1-3 as a renewal of God's blessing to mankind as in Genesis 2:18-24 ("Die Paradieserzählung: Eine Auslegung von Genesis 2,4b-3,24," *Wahrnehmungen Gottes im Alten Testament* [Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1982], pp. 112-14). B. Albrektson argues unconvincingly against the universal dimension of the blessing (*History and the Gods* [Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1967], pp. 80-81).

⁵¹ G. E. Wright, *The Old Testament against Its Environment* (London: SCM Press, 1950), p. 53.

⁵² W. Brueggemann, *The Land, Overtures to Biblical Theology* (London: SPCK, 1978), pp. 15-16.

⁵³ M. Fishbane, *Text and Texture* (New York: Schocken Books, 1979), p. 39.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 112. The biblical solution to the problem in Genesis 1-11 is in sharp contrast with that given in the Old Babylonian Atrahasis epic, which finds an urban solution to the threat of extinction. Despite formal similarities between the two accounts the ideologies are different from one another. Cf. I. M. Kidawada, "Literary Convention of the Primeval History," *Annals of the Japanese Biblical Institute* 1 (1975): 7-13.

igated human disobedience and failure. Though there are exceptions like Abel, Enoch, and Noah, more characteristic is the observation in 6:5 that man's thoughts were "only evil continually." Instead of submitting to God, man in his hubris⁵⁵ refused to obey the divine standards, and consequently he brought on himself repeated judgment.

Throughout the first 11 chapters of Genesis the motif of cursing, or crime and punishment,⁵⁶ is dominant. From the fall onward, sinful humanity is justly under the curse of God. Five times in the primeval history the divine curse is pronounced on the sin-tainted creation (3:14, 17; 4:11; 5:29; 9:25).⁵⁷ This repeated theme sets the stage for the call of Abram to be the mediator of God's blessing to the world.⁵⁸ Thus Genesis 1-11 and Genesis 12:1-3 are structured as problem and solution.⁵⁹ Wolff notes, "The so-called primal history explains in advance why all the families of the earth need blessing. This is disclosed in retrospect by 12:3b as its hidden, leading question (Leitfrage)."⁶⁰ In the patriarchal narratives blessing becomes the recurrent chord⁶¹ as the divine answer to the human dilemma caused by sin. The motive for this blessing is the grace of God. In the primeval narratives after each occasion of judgment there is a gracious opportunity.⁶² The grace extended after the dispersion of the nations (11:1-9) is the blessing mediated through Abram and his seed.⁶³

⁵⁵ Cf. G. W. Coats, "The God of Death: Power and Obedience in the Primeval History," *Interpretation* 29 (1975): 234.

⁵⁶ C. Westermann, *Die Verheissungen an die Väter* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1976), p. 47.

⁵⁷ Cf. J. L. Vesco, "Abraham: Actualisation et Relectures," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 55 (1971): 43-44.

⁵⁸ W. Zimmerli reasons: "The Yahwist wants to make clear by the shape of his narrative that here a turning point is reached. The persistence with which the key-word 'blessing-to bless' occurs no less than five times in both of the quoted verses [Gen 12:2-3] is intended to ensure that we realize that here the shift from the curse upon the world to blessing upon it is taking place" (*Man and His Hope in the Old Testament* [London: SCM Press, 1971], p. 50).

⁵⁹ Cf. O. H. Steck, "Genesis 12.1-3 and die Urgeschichte des Jahwisten," (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1982), pp. 117-48; and R. Rendtorff, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (London: SCM Press, 1985), p. 134.

⁶⁰ H. W. Wolff, "The Kerygma of the Yahwist," *Interpretation* 20 (1964): 145.

⁶¹ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. notes that "blessing" appears 82 times in the patriarchal narratives (*Toward an Old Testament Theology* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978], p. 57). Cf. W. Zimmerli, "Abraham," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 6 (1978): 52-53.

⁶² Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch*, p. 65.

⁶³ G. von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, 2 vols. (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1958, 1961), 1:167-68.

RECURRENT MOTIFS IN GENESIS 11 AND 12

It has been demonstrated that the call of Abram stands in organic connection with the primeval narratives. This significant canonical arrangement is even more apparent when Genesis 12 is viewed in relationship with the preceeding chapter. Several factors emerge that bear on the use of Abraham as a pilgrim figure, in particular as he is depicted in Hebrews 11:8-16.

The call of Abram is set firmly in conjunction with the **תולדות** in Genesis 11:10-32. The narrator in tracing the line of Shem arrives at Abram and his wife Sarai and then adds cryptically in 11:30, "And Sarai was barren; she had no child." Sarna points out that this detail along with several other notices in the passage serves to introduce information in the subsequent Abrahamic narratives.⁶⁴ If chapters 11 and 12-50 were not intended to be read together, the details in the **תולדות** would be superfluous. Their inclusion, however, is intended to inform the reader of a crucial theme. Though the point must not be pressed too far, the fact stands that the biblical texts often present barrenness as preparatory to divine intervention in blessing.⁶⁵ In the narrative of Genesis, if Abram and Sarai are to have any future, the problem of barrenness will have to be overcome. This then sets the stage for the divine promise of a seed.⁶⁶

Because the **תולדות** introducing the genealogy culminating in Abram follows immediately after the incident of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1-9, it is not surprising that common strands may be detected between the call of Abram and the corporate building and consequent dispersion.⁶⁷ The stated motivation for the construction of

⁶⁴ N. H. Sarna, "The Anticipatory Use of Information as a Literary Feature of the Genesis Narratives," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. R. E. Friedman (Berkeley: University of California, 1982), pp. 78-79. Cf. Hauge, "The Struggles of the Blessed in Estrangement," part 1, p. 7, and R. Kilian, *Die vorpriesterlichen Abraham-süberlieferungen* (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1966), pp. 279-80.

⁶⁵ Cf. the examples of Rebekah (Gen. 25:21), Rachel (Gen. 30:1), Samson's mother (Judg. 13:2), Hannah (1 Sam. 1:2), and Elizabeth (Luke 1:7).

⁶⁶ Genesis 12:2; 13:15-16; 15:4-5; 17:4-8, 19; fulfilled in 21:1-3. M. Sternberg points out that the dual references to Sarai's barrenness (11:30) and the divine promise of a seed (12:2) at the beginning of the Abrahamic narratives set the stage for the subsequent stories. Thus "each new development ... sharpens the non sequitur between God's promise and Abraham's plight" (*The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, Indiana Literary Biblical Series [Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana, 1985], p. 148).

⁶⁷ J. R. Lundbom relates Genesis 11:1-9 and 12:1-3 to 2 Samuel 7 ("Abraham and David in the Theology of the Yahwist," *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth*, ed. C. L. Meyers and M. O'Connor [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983], p. 204). He speculates, "2 Samuel 7-with its message about what kind of house Yahweh really wants provides the Yahwist with, just the inspiration he needs to complete the transition from primeval to patriarchal history. It leads him to juxtapose the Tower of Babel story and the Call of Abraham, and in doing so he is able to render a theolog-

Babel was the desire for social unity and greatness (11:4),⁶⁸ but its frustration led to social fragmentation.⁶⁹ The divine plan was that in Abraham all the families of the earth should be blessed (12:3).

This general correspondence between Abram and Babel is specified in the motifs of name and city.⁷⁰ As Kaiser notes, the driving ambition of the builders was the quest for a name, or renown.⁷¹ But to Abram (12:2), "God now grants that which men had tried to gain by their own resources, but to the man of His choice and on His terms."⁷² Yahweh's gracious blessing on Abram answers the self-seeking ambitions of Babel.⁷³

The exposition of Abraham's pilgrimage of faith in Hebrews 11:8-16 highlights the notion that he was seeking "the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (v. 10). The narratives of Abraham in Genesis give no hint to this. However, the juxtaposition of the call of Abram with the building of a city in Genesis 11:1-9 provides a plausible biblical matrix for the assertion in Hebrews. The builders of Babel sought to build for themselves a city⁷⁴ and a tower whose top would reach into heaven.⁷⁵ Their aspi-

ical judgment about 'hoar antiquity' that comes very close to being the same as one already contained in the Court History."

⁶⁸ Josephus forges a connection between Nimrod, the Flood, and Babel (*Antiquities of the Jews* 1.113-15).

⁶⁹ Cf. R. B. Laurin, "The Tower of Babel Revisited," in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies*, ed. G. A. Tuttle (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978), pp. 144-45. Augustine commented, "And that celebrated tower which was built to reach to heaven was an indication of this arrogance of spirit; and the ungodly men concerned in it justly earned the punishment of having not their minds only, but their tongues besides, thrown into confusion and discordance" (*On Christian Doctrine* 2.4).

⁷⁰ Cf. W. Zimmerli, *Man and His Hope in the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1971), p. 50.

⁷¹ Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, p. 86.

⁷² J. J. M. Navone, "The Patriarchs of Faith, Hope and Love," *Revue de l'université d'Ottawa* 34 (1964): 340. Lundbom writes, "'Making a name' means one thing in 11:4 but quite another in 12:2. In the Babel story men seek a name by erecting a city within which there is a religious temple.... Abraham, however, will achieve his name by having a myriad of descendants. These will become a great nation which no doubt is what the men of Babel are also striving for as they set out to build their city" ("Abraham and David in the Theology of the Yahwist," p. 205).

⁷³ Vesco, "Abraham: Actualisation et Relectures," pp. 42-43.

⁷⁴ In both the primeval and the patriarchal narratives, city building and city dwelling are viewed in a somewhat ominous light, as for example in Genesis 4:17, 18-19, 34. Cf. G. Wallis, "Die Stadt in den Überlieferungen der Genesis," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 78 (1966): 133-48, and E. Starobinski-Safrai, "Aspects de Jerusalem dans les Écrits Rabbiniques," *Revue de théologie et de philosophie* 112 (1980): 153.

⁷⁵ שָׁמַיִם can be used both for the visible sky and for the abode of God (Francis Brown,

rations were dashed, however, when Yahweh confused their language, so that "they stopped building the city" (v. 8). But from that very geographical area,⁷⁶ from Ur of the Chaldeans,⁷⁷ Yahweh called Abram to begin the quest for a different kind of city, not a city to reach up to God, but a city which has been constructed by God.⁷⁸

Conclusion

Several conclusions may be drawn from the analysis of the texts in Genesis referring to Abraham. First, the specific texts that speak of Abraham's movements are presented as historical narratives,⁷⁹ but emerging from the stories are frequent theological overtones. Second, the ordering of the Abrahamic narratives in the biblical corpus serves the theological function of providing the divine solution to the problem of sin in Genesis 1-11. Third, the motif of the city of God for which Abraham sought as expressed in Hebrews 11:9-10 can plausibly be taken to have a possible derivation from the collocation of the narratives of the Tower of Babel and the call of Abram in Genesis 11 and 12.

It would be claiming more than the evidence will sustain to insist that the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage is derived solely from the Genesis narratives of Abraham. Nevertheless the presence of metaphorical implications in the language and ordering of the narratives is at times already confirmed by the early Jewish writings and by the ancient versions. Therefore the early Christian concept of spiritual pilgrimage evidenced in Hebrews 11:9-10 can be explained reasonably as in part an extrapolation from the metaphorical intimations in the Genesis texts.

S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907], pp. 1029-30). Note the audacious assertion by the king of Babylon: "I will ascend to **יְהוָה**" (Isa. 14:13).

⁷⁶ J. Guillet, *Thèmes Bibliques, Théologie* 18 (Paris: Aubier, 1951), p. 104.

⁷⁷ The debated question of the location of Abram when he received the call in Genesis 12:1-3 (cf. Acts 7:2-4) is of little consequence on this point. What is of paramount significance is that his original domicile was regarded as Ur of the Chaldeans (Gen. 11:28, 31; 15:7; Neh. 9:7). Fishbane notes with reference to Genesis 11:1-9: "This final episode of the Primeval Cycle is thus a bathetic re-expression of the alienation of man from order and harmony when his orientation is not God-centered.... But the ironic mask of tragedy also smiles: the episode is double-edged, and unfolds its own reversal. For it is from this Babylon, from Ur, that Abraham separates for a new land" ("The Sacred Center: The Symbolic Structure of the Bible," p. 13).

⁷⁸ G. A. F. Knight, *Theology in Pictures* (Edinburgh: Handsel, 1981), pp. 122-23.

⁷⁹ The controversial question as to the historicity of the patriarchal narratives is not the issue here. The presentation of Abraham is effected by means of the genre of historical narrative. The veracity of the narrative presentation is a question separate from the description of the literary phenomena.

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WHAT IS THE WOMAN'S DESIRE?

SUSAN T. FOH

THE current issue of feminism in the church has provoked the reexamination of the scriptural passages that deal with the relationship of the man and the woman. A proper understanding of Genesis 3:16 is crucial to this reconsideration of the Biblical view of the woman. In Genesis 3:16 God pronounces judgment on the woman. Two areas of the woman's life are specifically mentioned: childbearing and her relationship to her husband. The latter is the concern of this article; "yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Gen. 3:16b, RSV)

A. Common Interpretations

The translation of תִּשְׁקֶה causes a large part of the difficulty in understanding Genesis 3.16. There are three typical interpretations. (1) תִּשְׁקֶה is frequently equated with sexual desire. The woman's craving for her husband will be so strong that to satisfy it she will be ready to face all the pains and sorrows of childbearing.¹ ". . . thy desire shall be to thy husband-- thou shalt not be able to shun great pain and peril for childbearing, for thy desire, thy appetite, shall be to thy husband. . ."² The woman still desires marital intercourse though the result, conceiving, and bearing children, brings pain. This interpretation closely links verse 16b with verse 16a (as does the RSV rendering of the waw as "yet," which could be translated "and"), and so fits the immediate context.

(2) תִּשְׁקֶה is viewed as "the desire that makes her the willing

1 David R. Mace, *Hebrew Marriage: a Sociological Study*, London, The Epworth Press, 1953. p. 196.

2 Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, Kansas City, Mo., Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967, p. 22.

slave of man."³ It is that "immense, clinging, psychological dependence on man."⁴ Seeing no reason to limit the scope of "desire" to sexual appetite, Clarence J. Vos would not exclude from it the woman's desire for the man's protection.⁵ Keil and Delitzsch see "desire" as a morbid yearning; the woman ". . . was punished with a desire bordering upon disease (תְּשׁוּקָה from תִּשְׁק to run, to have a violent craving for a thing) . . ."⁶

(3) Calvin states that Genesis 3:16b means that the woman will desire only what her husband desires and that she will have no command over herself.⁷ The woman's desires are wholly subservient to her husband's, as a result of God's judgment.⁸

Despite the differences in the interpretation of תְּשׁוּקָה, all of the commentators cited above agree that, through the woman's desire for her husband, he rules her. In other words, because the woman desires the husband in some way, he is able to rule over her.

B. Objections to the Preceding Interpretations

(1) The interpretation of תְּשׁוּקָה as sexual desire appears to be contradicted by etymology. Biblical scholars are well aware of the danger of confusing diachrony and synchrony in the use of this tool, but all sources of help must be weighed when there are only three occurrences of the word.⁹ The verbal root appears

3 John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (International Critical Commentary), Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1930, p.82.

4 Gini Andrews, *Your Half of the Apple; God and the Single Girl*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1972, p. 51.

5 Clarence J. Vos, *Woman in Old Testament Worship*, Delft, N. V. Verenigde Drukkerijen Judels & Brinkman, n.d., p. 24.

6 C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes, V. 1: The Pentateuch*, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., n.d., p. 103. Cf. H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, Columbus, The Wartburg Press, 1942, p. 172.

7 John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, v. 1, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1948, p. 172.

8 Cf. U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, Part 1, Jerusalem, The Magnes Press, 1961, p. 165, and Edward J. Young, *Genesis 3: A Devotional and Expository Study*, London, Banner of Truth Trust, 1966, p. 127.

9 As J. Barr also recognizes; "Etymology and the Old Testament,

to be קש for which BDB suggests three homographs. BDB would relate קש to the Arabic root saqa, to desire, excite desire.¹⁰ However, as they are aware, the phonemic equivalent of the Hebrew s is s in Arabic, a fact recognized by G. R. Driver¹¹ and Koehler-Baumgartner.¹² This suggests that the proper etymology in Arabic would be saqa, to urge, drive on, impel,¹³ a meaning consonant with the interpretation to be argued below.

(2) The rule of the husband, per se, is not a result of or punishment for sin. The headship of the husband over his wife is a part of the creation order. The commentators have dealt with this problem in two ways. The one ignores or misunderstands the New Testament interpretation of the creation order.¹⁴ It is suggested that before the fall, man and woman were equal and that neither ruled.

. . . and he shall rule over thee, though at their creation both were formed with equal rights, and the woman had probably as much right to rule as the man : but subjection to the will of her husband is one part of her curse.¹⁵

Language and Meaning (Oudtestamenische Studien, Deel 19), Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1974, p. 2.

10 Francis Brown, S. R. Driver & Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1907, p. 1003.

11 G. R. Driver, "Notes and Studies; Theological and Philological Problems in the Old Testament," *Journal of Theological Studies*, XLVII, 1946, p. 158.

12 Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1953. KB recognizes the derivation as from saqa by their distinguishing only two verbal roots, p. 957. One must suspect that the major influence which made BDB willing to contradict the usual phonemic equivalence and associate קש with the Arabic saqa was the notion that קש was a reference to sexual desire. The sounder lexicography may have been overruled by a commitment to the understanding of the passage.

13 Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, Bk. 1, Pt. 4, London, Williams and Norgate. 1872, p. 1470.

14 I Corinthians 11:8; I Timothy 2:13a. The source of and reason for the creation of the woman is significant. Man is created first; he is the source of the woman's existence: and she is created for the sake of the man. Therefore, the head of the woman is man,

15 Clarke, p. 22,

The other more frequent method of dealing with this problem is to differentiate between the husband's God-ordained headship and his "rule" in Genesis 3:16. The woman was subordinate to her husband from the beginning, but the "supremacy of the man was not intended to become a despotic rule, crushing the woman into a slave. . ."¹⁶ as it does after the fall. Before the fall, man's rule was gentle; afterwards it is tyrannous. Rule (*משל*) in Genesis 3:16 is said to suggest suppressing or overcoming.¹⁷ Not all agree that the post-fall rule of man is different in quality. Some have suggested it is different only in extent; after the fall, the woman is wholly subject to her husband (causing one to wonder what the pre-fall limits on the husband's authority were). This total subjection of the woman makes her liable to arbitrary treatment by her husband; so the complete rule of the husband can lead to a reign of tyranny.¹⁸ Practically, then, there is no difference in the rule of worse quality and that of greater extent.

(3) The preceding solution satisfies the demands of the over-all context, i.e., the tyrannous rule of the husband seems an appropriate punishment for the woman's sin. However, if the woman's desire makes her a willing slave of her husband (A.2) or if she has no desires except for husband's (A.3), the hardship of punishment in Genesis 3:16b is absent, because the woman willingly submits herself to her husband's rule. But willing submission contradicts the context of judgment and clashes with the New Testament commands to submit to the husband's authority (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; I Pet. 3:1), as well as experience.

C. Genesis 3:16b and Genesis 4:7b

תשוקה occurs only three times in the Old Testament (Gen. 3:16; 4:7; Song of Solomon 7:10).¹⁹

A comparison of Genesis 3:16b and 4:7b reveals that the

¹⁶ Keil & Delitzsch, p. 103. Cf. Calvin, p. 172, and Young, p. 127.

¹⁷ Vos, p. 25.

¹⁸ Keil & Delitzsch, p. 83.

¹⁹ Because the context of Song of Solomon 7: 10 is ambiguous, it is not possible to determine the precise meaning of *תשוקה* in this case. We shall only suggest that the meaning of "desire" proposed in this article is credible in Song of Solomon 7:10. Note that the immediate context is that of possession: "I am my beloved's. . ."

Hebrew is the same, except for appropriate changes in person and gender; but the English translation (RSV, ASV) varies.²⁰

ואל-אשך תשוקתך והוא ימשל-בך 3:16b
ואליך תשוקתו ואקה תמשל-בו 4:7b

RSV . . . Yet your desire shall be for your husband,
and he shall rule over you"
. . . its [sin's]²¹ desire is for you,
but you [Cain] must master it.

ASV . . . and thy desire shall be to thy husband,
and he shall rule over thee.
. . . and unto thee shall be its desire;
but do thou rule over it.

In Genesis 4:7 sin's desire is to enslave Cain -- to possess or control him, but the Lord commands, urges Cain to overpower

20 KJV translated them the same: in Gen. 4:7, ". . . and thou shalt rule over him." The problem is that Cain does not in fact rule, whether the antecedent of "him" is sin or Abel. Therefore, the future indicative or predictive translation of Gen. 4:7 is incorrect.

21 The masculine pronouns refer to the feminine noun "sin" חטאת A. R. Hulst in *Old Testament Problems* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1960, p. 1) says: "The Hebr. active part. robes, 'beseiger', is often used of an animal that lies in wait for its prey. . . . It is quite possible then, that the writer's use of the masc. suffixes has been determined by this mental image of 'the croucher'." Cf. Robert S. Candlish, *The Book of Genesis*, v. 1, Edinburgh, Adam & Charles Black, 1868, p. 99; G. R. Driver, p. 158; Keil & Delitzsch, p. 112. The only other alternate antecedent for the masc. pronouns is Abel; then the rule of Cain as the first born is in view. This interpretation is unlikely because (1) "Abel" is distant from the pronouns and does not occur in God's words to Cain but only in the preceding narrative; (2) it is not conclusive that the first born ruled his younger siblings; for instance, rule over his brothers is given to the supposed first born only at the death-bed of Isaac, and it is given to the second born Jacob by mistake (Gen. 27:29); and (3) what is the meaning of "desire" in such a case? Calvin (p. 203-4) explains the desire of Abel for Cain as that of an inferior for the superior, in this case the first born Cain. "Moreover, this form of speech is common [?] among the Hebrews, that the desire of the inferior should be towards him to whose will he is subject; thus Moses speaks of the woman (iii.16) that her desire should be to her husband." Calvin's interpretation of "desire" in Gen. 3: 16 and Gen 4:7 is consistent, but it is not appropriate in Song of Solomon 7:10, where the man's desire is to his beloved. According to Calvin's theory, the man would then be the inferior.

sin, to master it. An active struggle between Cain and sin is implied; the victor of the struggle is not determined by the words God speaks to Cain.

E. J. Young notes the similarity of language in Genesis 3:16 and 4:7 but fails to account for it.

As we examine the language of the Lord, we note that it is capable of two interpretations. First of all, however, it is well to compare it with the similar language in Genesis 4:7. In that verse we read, 'and his desire is unto thee.' The meaning in this context of the fourth chapter is that what sin desires is what Cain will carry out. His desire is unto Cain in the sense that Cain is a slave thereto, and must perform whatever sin's desire may be. In the present verse Gen. 3:16 we may render, 'and unto thy husband is thy desire.' It is obvious that the meaning here is the reverse of what it was in the fourth chapter. Is it not clear that in this third chapter the meaning cannot be that the desire of the woman is unto the husband so that he must do what she wishes? Is it not clear that the woman is not here pictured as a despot who compels the man to do the thing she desires? Plainly this is not the meaning of the text.²²

The above argument relies on certain presuppositions about the nature of the husband/wife relationship and about what the passage means. Young neglects the primary exegetical consideration -- context.

The passage, he continues, has two possible meanings, which we have considered before:

- (1) The desire of the woman will be subject to her husband (A.3).
- (2) The wife has a yearning for her husband, as a disease (A.2).

Young prefers the first alternative.²³

What Young considers an obviously impossible meaning for "desire," the meaning which "desire" has in the same syntactical setting only 15 verses away, is not impossible. The woman has the same sort of desire for her husband that sin has for Cain, a desire to possess or control him. This desire disputes the headship of the husband. As the Lord tells Cain what he should do, i.e., master or rule sin, the Lord also states what the husband

²² Young, p. 126-7.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

should do, rule over his wife. The words of the Lord in Genesis 3:16b, as in the case of the battle between sin and Cain, do not determine the victor of the conflict between husband and wife. These words mark the beginning of the battle of the sexes. As a result of the fall, man no longer rules easily; he must fight for his headship. Sin has corrupted both the willing submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband. The woman's desire is to control her husband (to usurp his divinely appointed headship, and he must master her, if he can. So the rule of love founded in paradise is replaced by struggle, tyranny and domination.

Experience corroborates this interpretation of God's judgment on the woman. If the words "and he shall rule over you" in Genesis 3:16b are understood in the indicative, then they are not true. As Cain did not rule over sin (Genesis 4: 7b), so not every husband rules his wife, and wives have desires contrary to their husbands' and often have no desire (sexual or psychological) for their husbands.

As we have stated earlier on the basis of context, the woman's desire does not contribute to the husband's rule; the opposite is the case. The two clauses, "and your desire to control shall be to your husband" and "*but* he should master you," are antithetical. The presence of the personal pronoun **הוא** (**הוא**) in Gen. 4:7) supports this understanding of the relationship of the two clauses.

The participants of two parallel but in some ways different activities are brought into prominence by realizing them as grammatically similar items in preverbal positions. A common way of doing this is to refer to the two participants by means of explicit pronoun subjects.²⁴

The use of the personal pronoun in preverbal position (**הוא**) is unusual and redundant and brings the participants into contrast.²⁵

²⁴ Francis I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, The Hague, Mouton, 1974. p. 150.

²⁵ Ibid.; cf. Takamitsu Muraoka, *Emphasis in Biblical Hebrew*, thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Senate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1969, p. 42.

D. Summary

Contrary to the usual interpretations of commentators, the desire of the woman in Genesis 3:16b does not make the wife (more) submissive to her husband so that he may rule over her. Her desire is to contend with him for leadership in their relationship. This desire is a result of and a just punishment for sin, but it is not God's decretive will for the woman. Consequently, the man must actively seek to rule his wife.

The reasons for preferring this interpretation are:

(1) It is consistent with the context, i.e., it is judgment for sin that the relation between man and woman is made difficult. God's words in Genesis 3:16b destroy the harmony of marriage, for the rule of the husband, part of God's original intent for marriage, is not made more tolerable by the wife's desire for her husband, but less tolerable, because she rebels against his leadership and tries to usurp it.

(2) It permits a consistent understanding of תְּשׁוּקָה in the Old Testament also consistent with its etymology.

(3) It recognizes the parallel between Genesis 3:16b and 4:7b. The interpretation of 4:7b is clearer; we know from the context that sin's desire to Cain involves mastery or enslavement and that Cain did not win the battle to rule sin.

(4) It explains the fact that husbands do not rule their wives as a result of God's proclamation in Genesis 3:16b. (Further support is implied by the New Testament commands for wives to be submissive to their husbands and the requirements for elders to rule their families.) הוּא יִמְשֵׁל בָּךְ is not an indicative statement, for if God states that something will come to pass, it will.

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BECAUSE IT HAD RAINED: A STUDY OF GEN 2:5-7 WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR GEN 2:4-25 AND GEN 1:1-2:3

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In 1958 the *Westminster Theological Journal* published "Because It Had Not Rained," an exegetical study of Gen 2:5 by Meredith G. Kline.¹ The article demonstrated that according to Gen 2:5 ordinary providence was God's mode of operation during the days of creation. Since God's mode of operation was ordinary providence, and since, for example, light (Day 1) without luminaries (Day 4) is not ordinary providence, the arrangement of the six days of creation in Genesis 1 must be topical not chronological. The current article is complementary to Kline's.²

Why does Gen 2:5 bother to tell us that certain kinds of vegetation were absent "*for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth?*" This question has intrigued and perplexed me for some time. Is the absence of rain mere geographical decoration or quasi-irrelevant data that sets the stage for the really important material that follows? Or is this information that is foundational to the narrative and its theology? The answer to this question has played a major role in my interpretation of Gen 1:1-2:25.

In this article, I intend to examine the logic, structure, and semantics of Gen 2:5-7, and to draw out several integrated conclusions: 1) It rained at the time of creation according to Gen 2:5-7. So we should discard the idea that the Bible teaches that it did not rain until the flood of Noah's day. 2) The structure of Gen 2:5-7 provides the key to understanding the structure of the whole of Gen 2:4-25, which turns out to be topical not chronological. 3) The structure and topical arrangement of Gen 2:4-25 in turn supports the argument that the arrangement of Gen 1:1-2:3 is also topical not chronological.³ 4) These structural considerations lead to new insights

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¹ Meredith G. Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," WTJ 20 (1958) 146-57.

² My article is also complementary to the more recent article, Meredith G. Kline, "Space and Time in the Genesis Cosmogony," *Perspectives on Science & Christian Faith* 48 (1996) 2-15. These two articles often arrive at the same conclusions from different lines of argumentation, and each contributes details left undiscussed or undeveloped in the other.

³ There may be some chronological sequence in these chapters, but such chronology is "accidental," i.e., the author's primary intention is to narrate the material topically.

into the polemical theology of Genesis 1-2. Genesis 1-2 serves, among other purposes, as a polemic against Canaanite Baalism. In sum, Gen 2:4-25 and Gen 1:1-2:3 are topical accounts that polemicize against Baalism, because it had rained.⁴

I. The Argument of Gen 2:5-7

Many of the details of Gen 2:5-7 have been studied and correctly interpreted, but in my estimation an interpretation that integrates all parts into a coherent whole has not yet been set forth. When the parts are interpreted in the immediate and broader literary contexts, as well as the geographical context of the Ancient Near East and the theological context of Canaanite religion, puzzles are solved and a coherent picture emerges. Verses 5-7 articulate a two-fold problem, reason for the problem, and solution to the problem.⁵ Verse 5a articulates the problem: "No *siah-hassadeh* had yet appeared in the land, and no '*eseb-hassadeh* yet sprung up." Some commentators make

⁴ Some might object that there is a methodological problem from the beginning: letting a latter text (Gen 2:5-7) control the interpretation of an earlier text (Gen 1:1-2:3). I could have written this paper in the exact opposite order, examining the structure of Gen 1:1-2:3, drawing out the implications for the parallel structure in Gen 2:4-25, and then using this material to answer the question regarding "no rain" in Gen 2:5. My starting with Gen 2:5-7 reflects the point at which I entered the interpretive process some time ago. 2) All Scripture is to be used to interpret all Scripture. We often know more about the beginning of a story once we have gotten to the end. An excellent example of this is found in Numbers 19, which describes the water of purification ritual. Verses 1-6 describe the burning of the heifer; vv 7-10 describe the removal of the ashes to a purified place outside the camp; vv 11-13 describe the use of the waters of purification for those who have come in contact with a dead body. At this point the reader is bewildered as to the relationship between the ashes and the water, since the text makes no connection between the two. In vv 14-19 it becomes clear, however, that in the ritual some of the ashes are put in ajar to which water is added, then this water is sprinkled on the unclean people and/or objects to bring about the ritual cleansing. It is only in the light of the latter material (vv 14-19) that the earlier material (vv 11-13) is comprehensible. The question is not, "Ought one to begin in Genesis 1 or Genesis 2?" The question is, "What is the interpretation that does most justice to both texts?"

⁵ The *NIV*, *NLT*, and *NAB* treat vv 5-7 as part of the same literary unit, and they begin a new paragraph at v 8; so too Victor P Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 150-60. From a text linguistics point of view the use of the waw+subject+predicate construction at the beginning of v 5 marks this material as background information; see Alviero Niccacci, *The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew Prose* (JSOTSup, 86; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990) 35-41. There is not unanimity as to where the background information ends and the main action begins. Some scholars take the waw-relative in v 7 as the marker for the first main action; see Niccacci, *Syntax*, 39; Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Waco, TX: Word, 1987); and C. John Collins, "Exegetical-theological Notes for Christian Faith in an Age of Science," unpublished (1997) 10 n50, who follows Niccacci and Wenham. But this is not necessary, since the waw-relative can be used to represent sequence within backgrounded material; see, e.g., Gen 47:13-14; Judg 11:1-3; 1 Sam 5:1. That v 7 belongs with vv 5-6 will become clear as the argument unfolds. For now, note the chiastic arrangement of the clause types that ties v6 (the reason) to v 7 (the solution): verbal (*ki lo' himtir 'lohim* + nominal (*w^e'adam 'ayin*) + nominal (*w^e'ed ya^aleh*) + verbal (*wayyisr*).

no attempt to specify the kinds of plants these two phrases have in view, but take them as general references to vegetation.⁶ Claus Westermann, on the other hand, has provided some specificity:

siah describes mainly but not exclusively shrubs or the wild shrubs of the steppe (Gen 21:15; Job 30:4, 7), and *'eseb-hassadeh* plants that serve for food or domestic plants.⁷

But even greater specificity is attainable. The phrase, *siah-hassadeh*, refers to the wild vegetation that grows spontaneously after the onset of the rainy season, and *'eseb-hassadeh* refers to cultivated grains.

At the end of the dry season, and after five months of drought, the hills of Israel are as dry as dust, and the vegetation is brown. The farmer's field is as hard as iron, so plowing and planting are impossible. Then come the rains, resulting in the hills of the steppe being clothed with verdure (Job 38:25-27). The rains also soften the soil and allow the farmer to plow and plant (see Ps 65:9-10). It is in this geographical context that we must understand *siah-hassadeh* and *'eseb-hassadeh*.⁸

The word, *siah*, occurs only four times (Gen 2:5, 21:15; Job 30:4, 7). From the three texts outside Gen 2:5 it is clear that *siah* refers to desert vegetation, i.e., to uncultivated vegetation that grows spontaneously as a result of fall

⁶ E.g., Ronald F Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis* (Baker: Grand Rapids, 1991), 34.

⁷ Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11* (Augsburg: Minneapolis, 1984) 199. See also Hamilton, *Genesis*, 154.

⁸ The account in Gen 2:4-5 is being narrated from the perspective of one living in the Syro-Palestinian Levant, as is clear from v8 where we are told that the garden was planted "in Eden, in the east." "In the east" presumes a fixed reference point somewhere in the west. Since the garden was located somewhere in Mesopotamia, the western reference point is the Syro-Palestinian Levant in general and the land of Canaan in particular, the land in which the audience for whom the story was originally written was about to live. In a complementary fashion, Theodore Hiebert, *The Yahwist's Landscape: Nature and Religion in Early Israel* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 36, makes the following point: "One key detail is the reference, in the epic's opening sentence, to rainfall as essential for the growth of vegetation.... Yet when the beginning of the Yahwist's epic is compared to the beginnings of origin narratives from other cultures, this mention of rain stands out as a distinctive characteristic of J's narrative. In the great river valley civilizations of the ancient Near East, Egypt and Mesopotamia, where agriculture was dependent on the inundation of lowlands by flooding rivers and on irrigation systems related to them, narratives focus on these phenomena rather than on the rainfall that is the ultimate source of the rising rivers. A creation text from Ur, in just such a series of introductory clauses describing not yet existent realities as those that begin the Yahwist's epic, focuses on the key phenomena of irrigation agriculture:

In those days no canals were opened,

No dredging was done at dikes and ditches on dike tops.

The seeder plough and ploughing had not yet been instituted
for the knocked under and downed people.

No (one of) all the countries was planting in furrows.

By contrast, J's reference to rain alone reflects the rain-based, dryland farming characteristic of the highlands on the shores of the Mediterranean where biblical Israel came into being." Hiebert's point is well taken, apart from his views on Pentateuchal sources.

rains. In Gen 21:15, for example, Hagar placed her young son under "one of the bushes (*siah*)" in the desert of Beersheba. The two occurrences in Job 30:4 and 7 are similar,

³Haggard from want and hunger,
they roamed the parched land
in desolate wastelands at night.

⁴In the brush (*siah*) they gathered salt herbs,
and their food was the root of the broom tree.

⁵They were banished from their fellow men,
shouted at as if they were thieves.

⁶They were forced to live in the dry stream beds,
among the rocks and in holes in the ground.

⁷They brayed among the bushes (*siah*)
and huddled in the undergrowth.

The "parched land" and "desolate wastelands" of v 3 make clear that *siah* refers to uncultivated vegetation of the desert or steppe.

So Westermann was being too cautious when he said "*siah* describes mainly but not exclusively shrubs or the wild shrubs of the steppe." There is no evidence to suggest that *siah* refers to anything other than "wild shrubs of the steppe."⁹

On the other hand, '*eseb-hassddeb* occurs in texts like Exod 9:22, 25 which have cultivated grain in view,

²²Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall all over Egypt--on men and animals and on everything growing in the fields ('*eseb-hassadeh*) of Egypt. . . ." ²⁵Throughout Egypt hail struck everything in the fields both men and animals; it beat down everything growing in the fields ('*eseb-hassadeh*) and stripped every tree.

Verses 31-32 provide specificity for the more general '*eseb-hassddeb*,

³¹The flax and barley were destroyed, since the barley had headed and the flax was in bloom. ³²The wheat and spelt, however, were not destroyed, because they ripen later.

Here '*eseb-hassddeb* clearly refers to cultivated grains like flax, barley, wheat, and spelt. Similarly, and closer in context to Gen 2:5, cultivated grains ('*eseb-hassddeb*) are in view in Gen 3:18 where the farmer will eat the grain that is the result of his arduous labor.¹⁰

⁹ Hiebert, *Landscape*, 37, is thus correct when he says that *siah-hassadeh* "is used for vegetation that grows in semiarid and arid regions, the low bushes and dwarf shrubs characteristic of areas that lack enough rain to support intensive agriculture." But his explicit connection with pasturage of sheep and goats has no support in the context.

¹⁰ See Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1994), 169. The New Living Translation translates '*eseb-hassadeh* in Gen 2:5 as "grain," as does Hiebert, *Landscape*, 37; but contra Hiebert, the contrast between *siah-hassadeh* and '*eseb-hassadeh* is not

This proposed contrast in Gen 2:5 between wild vegetation and cultivated grain finds immediate confirmation in v 5b.

Verse 5b articulates the two-fold reason for the problem with impeccable logic: "because the Lord God had not sent rain on the land, and there was no man to cultivate the ground." There was no vegetation that springs up spontaneously as a result of the rains, *because there was no rain*. And there was no cultivated grain, because *there was no cultivator*. So that the reader will not miss the two-fold reason corresponding to the two-fold problem, the Hebrew text focuses the reader's attention on the two-fold reason, *the absence of rain* and *the absence of anyone to cultivate* the fields, by placing *himtir* ("sent rain") and *'adam* ("man") in the clause-initial position in their respective clauses. A coherent picture is emerging: there was no wild vegetation because there was no rain, and there was no cultivated grain because there was no cultivator.

By this point the author has created an expectation in the mind of the reader: the two-fold problem with its two-fold reason will be given a two-fold solution. Yet, here is where virtually all interpretations fail for lack of coherence.

Verses 6-7 provide the two-fold solution: "So [God] caused rain clouds to rise up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground, and the Lord God formed the man. . . ." Verse 7 says, "the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." Here lies the solution to the second prong of the two-fold problem and reason. The logic is cogent and the picture is coherent: "no cultivated grain had sprung up ... for there was no one to cultivate the land ... and the LORD God formed the man." This is all rather straight forward and uncontested.

The crux is the meaning of the word *'ed* in v 6. Scholars have proposed numerous meanings for *'ed*,¹¹ but "stream" seems to have won the day.¹² "Stream" can not possibly be correct for two reasons: 1) The text does not say that the problem was a lack of water in general, a problem which could be solved by water from any one of a variety of sources, for instance, a stream. The problem was a lack of rain in particular, because in the ancient Syro-Palestine Levant rain was the sine qua non of vegetation, especially wild vegetation. 2) "Stream" makes nonsense out of such a well-constructed and tightly argued text. If "stream" is understood, the sense is something like "no wild vegetation had appeared in the land ... for the LORD God had not sent rain ... but a stream was arising to water the whole surface of the land." If a stream was present to water the whole surface of the land, then

between animal husbandry and agriculture, but between vegetation that requires rain only and that which requires a farmer in addition to rain.

¹¹ See Westermann, *Genesis*, 200-201, for an overview.

¹² See Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 17; Youngblood, *Genesis*, 35; Westermann, *Genesis*, 201; John J. Scullion, *Genesis: A Commentary for Students, Teachers, and Preachers* (The Liturgical Press: Collegeville, MN, 1992), 44.

there was ample water for the appearance of wild vegetation, and the reason clause ("for the Lord God had not sent rain") is completely irrelevant and illogical.¹³

Though Gen 2:5-7 primarily connects rain with wild vegetation, in reality rain is also the prerequisite for cultivated grain in the life of the ancient Hebrew farmer (see Deut 11:8-17). Since rain is the prerequisite for *'eseb-hassadeh* as well as for *siah-hassadeh*, and since Adam will eventually *'eseb-hassadeh* according to Gen 3:18, Adam must have experienced rain. Once again, if "for the LORD God had not sent rain" is to make any logical sense, rain must have fallen in Adam's experience.¹⁴

So v 6 is begging to be interpreted as a reference to rain. The expectation is for something like, "no wild vegetation had appeared in the land ... for the LORD God had not sent rain ... so God sent rain." On this point Mitchell Dahood was right. Stimulated by the association of the obscure Eblaite NI.DU with rain (*ga-sum*; Hebrew *gesem*) and the association of Hebrew *'ed* with rain (*mtr*), Dahood proposed reading NI.DU as Semitic *i-du* and understanding both the Eblaite *i-du* and the Hebrew *'ed* as "rain cloud."¹⁵ Whether or not Dahood is correct in his interpretation of the Eblaite evidence,¹⁶ he is correct in taking Hebrew *'ed* as "rain cloud," as can be demonstrated from the literary and climatic contexts in which *'ed* occurs in the MT itself.¹⁷

The only other recognized occurrence of Hebrew *'ed* is Job 36:27,18 which the NIV translates,

¹³ Kline, "Space," 12, says, "Gen 2:6 tells of the provision of a supply of water, the absence of which had previously delayed the appearance of vegetation.... Verse 6 must then be relating a new development, not something concurrent with the situation described in verse 5. For otherwise verse 6 would be affirming the presence of the supply of water necessary for the survival of vegetation at the very time when verse 5b says the absence of vegetation was due to the lack of such a water supply."

¹⁴ It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine other biblical accounts of creation that testify to the presence of rain from the beginning, but see, for example, Ps 104:13 and Prov 3:19-20, and Mark D. Futato, "Sense Relations in the 'Rain' Domain of the Old Testament," in Mark S. Smith, ed., *Essays in Honor of Aloysius Fitzgerald* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic Biblical Association, forthcoming) and idem "Dew," in Willem G. VanGemeren, ed., *The New International Dictionary of Theology and Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 2.363-64.

¹⁵ Mitchell Dahood, "Eblaite I-Du and Hebrew 'Ed, 'Ram-Cloud'," *CBQ* 43 (1981) 534-38.

¹⁶ See David Toshio Tsumura, *The Earth and the Waters in Genesis I and 2* (JSOTSup, 83; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989) 95-97, for a recent criticism of Dahood's proposed Semitic etymology. The only criticism offered by Tsumura that has any bearing on my argumentation is his third point, "[Dahood's] translation, 'So he made a rain cloud come up' is not syntactically acceptable" (96); but the consecutive nature of this clause is not an essential part of the argument, and see my footnote note 29, which counters Tsumura's assertion regarding its acceptability.

¹⁷ The biblical evidence can stand on its own and does not need support from comparative Semitics.

¹⁸ Dahood, "Rain Cloud," 537-38, also reinterprets the personal name *matred* (Gen 36:39; 1 Chr 1:50) as "Rain of the Cloud," with an elided aleph. He cites several theophoric names with a "rain" component. There is also the simple Hebrew name *gesem* (Neh 2:19).

He draws up the drops of water,
which distill as rain to the streams ('*ed*).

The *NIV* translates '*ed* here with "streams" in keeping with its rendering in Gen 2:6. A footnote, however, offers an alternative: "distill from the mist ('*ed*) as rain." The alternative in the footnote is certainly closer to the true sense. It correctly recognizes the sense "from" for the preposition *l'*,¹⁹ but "mist" ("water in the form of particles floating or falling in the atmosphere at or near the surface of the earth and approaching the form of rain") cannot be the sense of '*ed* here, since mist does not "distill as rain (*matar*)," especially as "abundant rain" (see v 28). The ancients knew as well as we that rain distills/drops from clouds, as Eccl 1:3 makes clear,

If clouds are full of water,
they pour rain upon the earth.

Dahood, translates Job 36:27,

When he draws up drops from the sea,
they distill as rain (*matar*) from his rain cloud ('*ed*).²⁰

Such a rendering not only makes sense in the narrow confines of the verse and Syro-Palestinian meteorology, but note how well it fits the context,

²⁷When he draws up drops from the sea,
they distill as rain from his rain cloud. (Dahood)

²⁸The clouds pour down their moisture
and abundant showers fall on mankind. (*NIV*)

Note how a hinge is formed by v 27b ("rain cloud") and v 28a ("clouds"). This hinge connects the beginning of the cycle (evaporation in v 27a) with the end of the cycle (abundant rain on the land in v 28b). Clearly, the text does not picture mist distilling as rain or drops of water distilling to streams, but abundant rain falling from rain clouds.

Given that '*ed* has the sense "rain cloud" in Job 36:27, where it is collocated with rain (*mtr*), it is certainly plausible that *ed* has the same sense in Gen 2:6, where it is likewise collocated with rain (*mtr*; Gen 2:5). The plausibility of this conclusion is confirmed by the fact that Dahood was not the first to understand '*ed* in the sense of "rain cloud;" the ancient Targums consistently render '*id* with Aramaic '*nn* ("cloud")!²¹

¹⁹ See John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988) 475, and Marvin H. Pope, *Job* (AB 15; Carden City, NY: Double Day, 1965), 273.

²⁰ Dahood, "Rain Cloud," 536.

²¹ Tsumura, *Earth*, 94. For Onkelos, see Alexander Sperber, ed. *The Bible in Aramaic, Based on Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 1.2; for Pseudo Jonathan, see E. G. Clarke, ed. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch: Text and Concordance* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1984), 2; for *Neophiti I*, see Alejandro Diez Macho, ed. *Neophyti I: Targum Palestinense Ms de la Biblioteca Vaticana* (Madrid: Consejo Superior De Investigaciones Científicas, 1968) 1.8.

An immediate objection arises, however, if we translate Gen 2:6, "A rain cloud came up (qal of 'lh) from the land," since rain clouds do not literally come up from the land. So, for example, David Tsumura has said,

On the other hand, ed is described as "coming up" (*ya'aleh*) from the earth ('eres), either from the surface of the earth or from underground. Thus, 'ed, the water from below, is clearly distinguished from rain water, the water from above, in Gen 2:5-6.²²

But consider a text like Ps 135:7,

He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth ('eres);
he sends lightning with the rain
and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

The verb translated "makes rise" in v 7a is the hiphil of 'lh, and the word for rain in v 7b is *matar*. Ps 135:7 thus provides a close parallel for Gen 2:5-6, showing that clouds do rise from the land, at least in terms of how things appear to an observer standing on the land. Clouds appear on the horizon, whether the horizon is a plain or a mountain, and thus give the appearance of rising from the land. The seventh time Elijah's servant looked out over the Mediterranean he said a "cloud as small as a man's hand is rising ('lh) from the sea" (1 Kgs 18:44), not literally rising from the sea, of course, but rising in terms of appearance, since the cloud was rising in relation to the sea that formed the western horizon. Compare also Jer 10:13 || 51:16,

When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar;
he makes clouds rise (hiphil of 'lh) from the ends of the earth ('eres).
He sends lightning with the rain (*matar*)
and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

In light of these texts, I am also inclined to agree with Dahood²³ when he takes *ya'aleh* in Gen 2:6 (used in the context of *mtr* and 'eres) as a hiphil with God as the subject for the following reasons: 1) Ps 135:7 and Jer 10:13 use the hiphil of 'lh + "clouds" as the direct object with God as subject in the context of *matar* and 'eres, and thus the legitimacy of collocating the hiphil of *dh* + "clouds" is established, 2) God is the subject of the preceding *himtir* (Gen 2:5) and the following *wayyiser* ("formed;" v 7), so continuity of the subject would result,²⁴ and most significantly 3) God would be the

Pseudo Jonathan says, "But a cloud of glory came down from beneath the throne of glory, and was filled with water from the ocean, went up again from the earth, and sent rain down and watered the whole surface of the ground;" periphrastic elements are italicized in Michael Maher, trans. *Targum Pseudo Jonathan: Genesis* (The Aramaic Bible IA; Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 1A.22.

²² Tsumura, *Earth*, 93.

²³ Dahood, "Rain Cloud," 536.

²⁴ While continuity of the subject is not required (see 2:21 and Collins, "Exegetical-theological Notes," 13 n79), such continuity is a consideration along with the other two factors.

explicit *solver* of both the problem of no rain and the problem of no cultivator--God caused the rain clouds to rise and God formed the cultivator.

A second objection to taking 'ed as a reference to rain (cloud) would be that Gen 2:10 says a "river" watered the garden, not rain. In fact, the repetition of the hiphil of *sqh* in v 6 and v 10 is part of an argument for taking 'ed as a reference to the river of v 10.²⁵ The repetition, however, can be explained as a means of connecting the source ("rain clouds;" v 6) with the result ("river;" v 10). But even if 'ed is defined by the "river," the presence of rain simply becomes an unargued presupposition of the text. This is so because the ancients were as well aware as we are that precipitation is the source of river water (see, for example, Matt 7:25, 27). Moreover, the word for "river" in our text, *nahar*, is typically used for perennial rivers like the Euphrates. Since such rivers are fed by rain (and melting snow in the surrounding mountains), the presence of a *nhr* would be proof of the presence of rain rather than an objection to it. The burden of proof rests squarely on the one who would wish to argue that something other than a precipitation-fed river is in view in the use of the word *nahar* in Gen 2:10, since the word is never used for anything other than a precipitation-fed river in the Hebrew Bible. But ultimately the resultant illogical text (as discussed above) when 'ed is taken as "stream" outweighs all other considerations and precludes understanding 'ed as a reference to a river or stream.

Meredith Kline has adopted Dahood's interpretation of 'ed as "rain cloud" and has further suggested taking the imperfect of 'Ih in an inceptive sense,²⁶ "he began to make rain clouds²⁷ arise." Grammatically the inceptive sense is possible,²⁸ and contextually the inceptive sense is required, for if there had been rain clouds previously, there would have been rain and the reason clause ("for the LORD God had not sent rain") would be irrelevant and illogical.

As with the second prong of the two-fold problem and reason, so also with the first prong, a coherent picture emerges: "no wild vegetation had appeared in the land ... for the Lord God had not sent rain ... so²⁹ he began to make rain clouds arise from the land and water the whole surface of the ground."

²⁵ See Cassuto, *Genesis*, 104.

²⁶ Kline, "Space," 12.

²⁷ I am taking the singular as a collective.

²⁸ Bruce K. Waltke, and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 31.2c.

²⁹ For the use of waw + non-predicate + predicate in a consecutive clause, see GKC §166a; while most of the examples are of volitives, Prov 30:3b is not, *w^eda'at q^edosim 'eda* ("so I do [not] know the Holy One"), waw+direct object+imperfect. The consecutive nature of the clause is not essential to the argument; the clause could (with less likelihood) be adversative; for an adversative clause introduced with waw following a negative clause, see GKC § 163a and Paul Jouon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Subsidia Biblica 14; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), §172a.

1. Summary

Gen 2:5-7 is quite logical, highly structured, and perfectly coherent:

Problem	Reason	Solution
1) No wild vegetation	--> 1) No rain	--> 1) God sent rain
2) No cultivated grain	--> 2) No cultivator	--> 2) God formed a cultivator

II. *Implications for the Reading of Gen 2:4-25*

The narrative of Gen 2:4-25 flows at a steady pace, moved along by a sequence of waw-relative verbs. The "most obvious and frequent" use of the waw-relative is "that of simple chronological succession."³⁰ "That is, when a *wayyiqtol* verb is used, the story usually takes an incremental step forward along a timeline."³¹ So, the *prima facie* reading of Gen 2:4-5 is chronological. A clear exception to the apparently chronological sequencing of material is the information provided in vv 10-14, pertaining to the river; this section is marked as non-sequential and circumstantial in the normal manner: by the use of the waw + subject + predicate construction (*w^enahar yose'*).³² External considerations (comparing Gen 2:4-25 with Gen 1:1-2:3) and internal considerations (the flow of the narrative in Gen 2:4-25), however, disallow a strictly chronological reading of Gen 2:4-25.

An external example of *dischronology* is found in Gen 2:19a, "Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them."³³ The Hebrew verbs translated "formed" and "brought" are waw-relatives, resulting in the *prima facie* sequence of God's forming (*wayyiser*) of Adam (v 7a), followed by God's forming (*wayyiser*) of the animals (v 19a). A straight-forward reading of Gen 2:19, in other words, puts Gen 2:4-25 in conflict with a chronological reading of Gen 1:1-2:3, where the animals were formed before the man (Gen 1:24-27). One may resort to the use of the waw-relative for a past perfect in this case to harmonize the two texts,³⁴ but a

³⁰ S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew: And Some Other Syntactical Questions*

(2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1881), 80. See also Waltke and O'Connor, *Syntax*, §33.2.1a.

³¹ Randall Buth, "Methodological Collision Between Source Criticism and Discourse Analysis: The Problem of 'Unmarked Temporal Overlay' and the Pluperfect/Nonsequential *wayyiqtol*," *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics* (ed. Robert D. Bergen; Dallas, TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), 138.

³² See Buth, "Collision," 140, and Niccacci, *Syntax*, 35-41. See also C. John Collins, "The *Wayyiqtol* As 'Pluperfect': When and Why," *TB* 46 (1995) 118. Sequence would have been expressed by the waw-relative, *wayyese*; see Jouon and Muraoka, *Grammar*, § 159d-e.

³³ NASB. The same sense is found in the *KJV*, *NKJV*, 1901 *ASV*, *RSV*, and *NRSV*

³⁴ See Collins, "Wayyiqtol," 135-40, for a discussion of the issue in general and his application to Gen 2:19 in particular. The waw-relative can be used for the pluperfect in a limited set of environments: when there is lexical repetition or when knowledge of the real world leads to the conclusion that an explanation of a previous event or situation is being provided; see Buth, "Collision," 147. Buth, "Collision," 148-49, argues that Gen 2:19 does not meet the

waw-relative is not the *obvious syntactic* choice for dischronologized material, as Gen 2:10 has already shown. The point is that while the *prima facie* reading is chronological, a closer reading (aided by an external comparison with Gen 1:1-2:3) leads us to the conclusion that the *prima facie*, chronological reading is not correct. The author is guided at this point by concerns that are not chronological.³⁵ For, in keeping with the style of the text, had Moses been concerned about strict chronology and the chronological harmony of Gen 1:1-2:3 with Gen 2:4-5, he could have syntactically signaled the dischronology of Gen 2:19 with the waw + subject + predicate construction, as in Gen 2:10, or with a relative clause containing a perfect verb for the past perfect, as in Gen 2:8 (*ser yasar*, "whom he had formed").

A key internal consideration confirms that strict chronology is not the organizational control for Gen 2:4-25. Having formed Adam (v 7a), God proceeded to place Adam in the Garden (v 8b),

⁷Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. ⁸And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.³⁶

But then in v 15 we read,

Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.³¹

Again, the verb translated "took" in v 15 is a waw-relative, that, if taken to indicate chronological sequence, would result in Adam being placed in the garden in v 8 and then being placed in the garden a second time in v 15. I suppose one could argue that Adam was put in the garden in v 8, was removed from the garden or that he left the garden without our being told, and was subsequently put back in the garden in v 15, but such straining to maintain a chronological reading of the text is unwarranted, especially

criteria for temporal overlay. See also Waltke and O'Connor, *Syntax*, §33.2.3 for a general discussion.

³⁵ Using the waw-relative for the pluperfect instead of the usual constructions (waw + subject + predicate or the perfect in a relative clause) serves to elevate the material to a main-line situation in the narrative, rather than demoting the material to a subordinate level; see Buth, "Collision," 148. An author may use the unexpected waw-relative form for a variety of reasons. Collins, "Wayyiqtol," 139, argues that the communicative effect in Gen 2:19 is to emphasize the anthropocentric nature of the story. A better explanation seems to be that introducing the forming of the animals at this point creates dramatic tension by raising the question, "Will a suitable helper for the man be found among the animals?" The answer is, "But for the man, no suitable helper was found!" (v20b). Then, after this dramatic delay, the suitable helper is made, and the man exclaims, "*zo't* (This one [as opposed to the previous animals])! *happa'am* (This time [as opposed to the previous parade])!" (v23).

³⁶ NASB. The same sense is found in the *KJV*, *NKJV*, 1901 *ASV*, *RSV*, and *NRSV*.

³⁷ *NASB*. The same sense is found in the *KJV*, *NKJV*, 1901 *ASV*, *RSV*, and *NRSV*.

since there is an easier solution, one that is explicable within the conventions of Hebrew style.

Gen 2:4-25 provides an example of the Hebrew stylistic technique of synoptic/resumption-expansion.³⁸ A Hebrew author will at times tell the whole story in brief form (synopsis), then repeat the story (resumption), adding greater detail (expansion). Such is the case in Gen 2:4-25.

Gen 1:1-2:3 is the prologue to the entire Book of Genesis,³⁹ and Gen 2:4 is the heading to Gen 2:4-4:26, the first of ten "*toledot*" sections that provide the structure for the Book of Genesis as a whole.⁴⁰ Gen 2:5-7 provides the setting for Gen 2:8-25 in particular. Gen 2:8 is a synopsis of the whole that is resumed and expanded in Gen 2:9-25.

The synopsis has a two-fold nature, in keeping with the two-fold nature of the introductory vv5-7. First, God planted a garden (v 8a), then he placed in the garden the man whom he had formed (v 8b). This synopsis with its focus on vegetation and the man in the garden is clearly integrated with--and flows from--the preceding concern with the lack of vegetation and the lack of a man to cultivate the ground. In other words, the coherent picture that emerged in vv 5-7 continues to manifest itself in the synopsis of v8. Gen 2:4-25 is not a second account of the creation of the heavens and the earth, but is rather an account that focuses on the planting of a garden and human life in that garden (vv 9-25), as the introduction anticipates and the synopsis articulates.⁴¹

Verses 9-14 resume and expand v 8a, the planting of the garden. Verses 15-25 resume and expand v 8b, the putting of the man in the garden.

Verses 9-14 resume and expand v 8a. In v 9a the planting (*nt'*) of the garden is detailed in terms of God causing to sprout (*smh*) from the ground "every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food." Pleasing to whose sight and good for whose food? The man's sight and his food, obviously. In addition, God caused the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to sprout (v 9b); both of these trees find their meaning in relation to the man as well. Not only does v 9 pick up the first half of the two-fold synopsis in v 8a, but it also picks up the first half of the two-fold problem in v 5a: there was no vegetation. Verses 10-14 go on to describe the river that waters the garden and that then divides and flows through such places as Havilah, Cush, and Ashur: places where *people* live. The gold and precious stones are of value to the *people* who would live in these places and

³⁸ Herbert Chanan Brichto, *Toward a Grammar of Biblical Poetics: Tales of the Prophets* (Oxford:

Oxford University, 1992), 13-19.

³⁹ Ian Hart, "Genesis 1:1-2:3 As a Prologue to the Book of Genesis," *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (1995) 315-36, and Kline, "Space," 11.

⁴⁰ See Meredith G. Kline, in Donald Guthrie and J. A. Motyer, ed., "Genesis," *The New Bible Commentary* (3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 83, and Sarna, *Genesis*, 16-17.

⁴¹ I understand Gen 2:5 as having a global reference that would parallel the situation prior to Days 3b and 6b, i.e., before God created vegetation (Day 3b) and people (Day 6b); see below.

to those with whom they would trade. Gen 2:9-14 describes a garden of *vegetation* clearly designed for *human habitation*.

Verses 15-25 resume and expand v 8b. Verse 15 repeats v 8b with different vocabulary and adds the explicit purpose for placing the man in the garden: "to cultivate ('*bd*) it." Not only does v 15 pick up the second half of the two-fold synopsis in v 8b, but it also picks up the second half of the two-fold reason in v 5b: "there was no man to cultivate ('*bd*) the ground." Verses 16-17 explicitly connect the man and the vegetation, as the two were implicitly connected in v 9. The remainder of the text (vv 18-25) provides the details of how God created a suitable helper for the man in the garden. By the end of Genesis 2 the man and the woman are living blissfully in the garden.

1. *Summary*

Gen 2:4-25 is a highly structured topical account with a two-fold focus on vegetation and humanity. The two-fold problem of no wild vegetation and no cultivated vegetation (v 5), owing to the two-fold reason of no rain and no cultivator (v 6), provisionally solved in a two-fold way by the sending of rain clouds and the forming of a man (v 7), is roundly resolved in the two-fold synopsis of God planting a garden and putting the man in the garden to cultivate it (v 8), and the two-fold expansion with the same focus on vegetation and humanity (vv 9-25).

III. *Implications for the Reading of Gen 1:1-2:3*

Gen 1:1-2 and 2:1-3 form a frame around the creation account. The initial sentences of the opening and closing sections with their repetition of "the heavens and the earth" form an inclusio.

Genesis 1 begins with the grand affirmation that in the beginning God created everything. Like Gen 2:5-7, Gen 1:2 provides the setting for the following material. Parallel to Gen 2:5 with its two-fold problem, Gen 1:2 presents a two-fold problem: 1) the earth was "unproductive and uninhabited"⁴² and 2) "darkness was over the surface of the deep." Both of

⁴² Bruce K. Waltke, "The First Seven Days: What Is the Creation Account Trying to Tell Us?," *CT* (August 12, 1988) 43 and Cassuto, *Genesis*, 22, argue against over interpreting this phrase as having two distinct referents. But Tsumura, *Earth*, 17-43, has made a compelling case for understanding the phrase to refer to the earth as unproductive and uninhabited; note that at the end of Day 3 the earth is productive ("The earth produced vegetation;" 1:12), and at the end of Day 6 the earth is inhabited ("And God said, 'Let the earth produce living creatures;'" 1:24), and thus the problem of the earth being "unproductive and uninhabited" has been resolved in a symmetrical way. The topic of another paper would be to trace this protology of "unproductive and uninhabited" through the typology of Israel as the new people in the new fertile land to the eschatology of the new creation inhabited by a people no one can number.

these problems are resolved in the following material, just as the two-fold problem of Gen 2:5 was resolved in the text that follows it.

Gen 2:1 signals the end of the account by means of the repetition of "the heavens and the earth." Gen 2:2-3 then brings us to the *telos* of the text, God's Sabbath rest.

Gen 1:3-31 tell the story of God's eight creative acts in six days.⁴³ Day 1 recounts the first creative act ("And God said, 'Let there be light'"), Day 2 recounts the second ("And God said, 'Let there be an expanse'"), then Day 3 recounts the third and fourth ("And God said, 'Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear'" plus "And God said, 'Let the land produce vegetation'"). Like Day 1, Day 4 recounts a single creative act, the fifth ("And God said, 'Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky'"); like Day 2, Day 5 recounts one, the sixth ("And God said, 'Let the water teem with living creatures and let the birds fly above the earth'"); like Day 3, Day 6 recounts two, the seventh and the eighth ("And God said, 'Let the land produce living creatures'" plus "And God said, 'Let us make man in our image'"). This arrangement of 1 + 1 + 2 followed by 1 + 1 + 2 makes the parallel nature of Days 1 through 3 and Days 4 through 6 obvious.

The parallels go beyond that of the number of creative events and days, however. There are other obvious parallels between Days 1 through 3 and Days 4 through 6. The creating of light on Day 1 parallels the creating of the luminaries on Day 4. The creating of the waters below and the sky above on Day 2 parallels the creating of the fish and the birds on Day 5. The creating of dry land on Day 3a parallels the creating of land animals on Day 6a, and the creating of vegetation on Day 3b parallels the creating of mankind on Day 6b.

It may seem that the parallelism breaks down at the end, because vegetation and mankind may not seem like much of a parallel. But when one recalls the two-fold focus on vegetation and humanity in Gen 2:4-25, the parallelism becomes evident. The parallelism between vegetation and people is not only evident in the text but is highly significant for the theology of the text (see below).

The first three days find their *telos* in the creation of vegetation on Day 3b, and the second three days find their *telos* in the creation of humanity on Day 6b. Thus Gen 1:1-2:3 has the same two-fold focus as Gen 2:4-25, a focus on vegetation and humanity. Rather than being two disparate accounts from two disparate sources, Gen 1:1-2:3 and Gen 2:4-25 form a highly integrated literary unit. Rather than being a second creation account, Gen 2:4-25 is properly read as a resumption and expansion not of Day 6 but of Days 3b and 6b taken together as a unit.

⁴³ For a schematic presentation of this well known point see Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning: the Opening Chapters of Genesis* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1984), 54-55.

Day 3b speaks of the creation of vegetation (*dese'*) in two broad kinds: "seed-bearing plants" (*'eseb mazria' zera'*) and "trees that bear fruit" (*'es p^eri'oseh p^eri*).⁴⁴ Day 6b specifies that people are permitted to eat from both kinds of vegetation: "seed-bearing plants" (*'eseb zorea' zera'*) and "every tree that has fruit with seed in it" (*kol-ha'asaser-bo p^eri-ha'es*). So Days 3b and 6b are bound together by linguistic repetition as well as by thematic conception. So too, the people of Day 6b are bound to the vegetation of Day 3b through the motif of food.⁴⁵

Gen 1:3-31 is topically arranged. Granted 1) the common focus in Genesis 1 and 2 on vegetation and humanity, 2) the general parallels between Days 1 through 3, 3) the specific parallels between Days 3b and Day 6b, 4) the fact that Gen 2:4-25 resumes and expands Days 3b and 6b taken together, and 5) the topical nature of Gen 2:4-25, we should not be surprised by the suggestion that the coherent reading of Gen 1:1-2:3 (that is, the reading that coheres internally as well as externally with Gen 2:4-25) is topical rather than chronological. Such a reading is confirmed by some further details from Days 1 and 4, as well as by the theology of Gen 1:1-2:25.

The parallelism between Days 1 and 4 goes beyond the general correspondence between the creation of light on Day 1 and the creation of the luminaries on Day 4. What did God accomplish on Day 1 by means of the creation of light? "God divided the light from the darkness" (*wayyabdel 'lohim ben ha-'or uben hahosek*), and the result was "day" (*yom*) and "night" (*layla*). So by the end of Day 1, God had successfully divided the light from the darkness and established the sequence of day and night. Now, what was God's purpose in creating the luminaries on Day 4? We are given a variety of purposes, e.g., they will serve as signs and will rule the day and the night. But what is the overarching purpose? The overarching purpose is indicated by the repetition of "to divide" (*l'habdil*) in v 14 and v 18, a repetition that forms an inclusio around Day 4. In v 14 we are told that God created the luminaries "to divide the day from the night" (*lehabdil ben hayyom uben hallayld*). But God had already divided the day from the night on Day 1! In v 18 we are told that God created the luminaries "to divide the light from

⁴⁴ Whereas Gen 1:11-13 divides all vegetation into two general groups (non-trees and trees), Gen 2:5 divides all vegetation into two other groups (uncultivated and cultivated); both divisions are based on ordinary observation. It is clear by this point, moreover, that Gen 2:5 interfaces with Gen 1:1-2:3 at the end of Day 3a (when there was 'eres but no vegetation) and the end of Day 6a (when there was no man); see David Toshio Tsumura, "Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern Stories of Creation and Flood: An Introduction," *I Studied Inscriptions From Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Gen 1-11* (ed. Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 28-29, who situates Gen 2:5 at Gen 1:9-10, when the waters were cleared from the land but there was not yet any vegetation, but does not see the connection with Day 6b.

⁴⁵ The man and the woman being permitted to eat from the trees in Genesis 1 is an obvious setting of the stage for Gen 2:16-17, where prohibition regarding eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is added to permission regarding eating from other trees; see Kline, "Space," 11.

the darkness" (*l'habdil ben ha' or uben hahosek*). But God had already divided the light from the darkness on Day 1! These linguistic parallels between Day 1 and Day 4 must not be overlooked. Either God's work on Day 4 is redundant, reaccomplishing the same thing he had already accomplished on Day 1, or the accounts of God's work on Days 1 and 4 are two different perspectives on the same creative work.

The forming and stationing of the sun, moon, and stars are attributed to day four. Their functions with respect to the earth are also stated here, first in the fiat section (Gen 1:14,15) and again (in reverse order) in the fulfillment section (Gen 1:16-18). They are to give light on the earth and to rule by bounding light/day and darkness/night, as well as by demarcating the passage of years and succession of seasons. These effects which are said to result from the production and positioning of the luminaries on day four are the same effects that are already attributed to the creative activity of day one (Gen 1:3-5). There too daylight is produced on the earth and the cycle of light/day and darkness/night is established.⁴⁶

The repetition of language binds the work of the Days 1 and 4 together into a single activity.

In terms of chronology, day four thus brings us back to where we were in day one, and in fact takes us behind the effects described there to the astral apparatus that accounts for them. The literary sequence is then not the same as the temporal sequence.⁴⁷

But the account of Day 4 adds information to that given on Day 1: the luminaries are the sources of the light created on Day 1, and there are subordinate purposes for the creation of the luminaries as well. In other words, Days 1 and 4 are another application of the synopsis-resumption/expansion technique employed on a variety of levels in Genesis 1 and 2. There is a consistent style of narration employed in both texts: just as Gen 2:15 is not chronologically sequential to Gen 2:8b, but is a repetition with additional information regarding the placing of the man in the garden, so Day 4 is not chronologically sequential to Day 1, but is a repetition with additional information regarding the creation of light.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Kline, "Space," 7-8.

⁴⁷ Kline, "Space," 8.

⁴⁸ A rarely discussed but important text that bears on the question of a chronological reading of Gen 1 is Job 38:4-7,

4Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?

Tell me, if you understand.

5Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!

Who stretched a measuring line across it?

6On what were its footings set,

or who laid its cornerstone-

7while the morning stars sang together

and all the angels shouted for joy?

This text assumes the creation of the stars before the founding of the earth and before the separation of the seas and dry land; see Ps 104:5-9 for this same architectural picture of the

One might object that had Moses wished to represent Gen 1:14-31 as an overlay of Gen 1:3-13 he would have begun v 14 with the expected *we'elohim amar* (waw + subject + predicate), and that the use of the waw-relative indicates that the events of Day 4 are temporally sequential to those of Days 1 through 3. But as we have already noted, the waw-relative (here *wayyo'mer*) can be used for temporal overlay when either lexical repetition or knowledge of the real world signals such an overlay.⁴⁹ Here both criteria are met: lexical repetitions abound between Day 1 and Day 4, and light without luminaries is not part of the real world in which the original audience lived.⁵⁰

1. Summary

Gen 1:3-31 is a coherent account of creation that has been arranged topically to focus the reader's attention on vegetation and humanity. This focus sets the stage for the sequel, Gen 2:4-25, which resumes and expands upon this two-fold focus in a variety of ways, one in particular being the role that rain plays in the production of the vegetation that people eat. These literary conclusions have significant implications for understanding one key aspect of the theology of the text.

IV. *Implications for the Theology of Genesis 1-2*

The literary structure of Genesis 1 and 2 is significant for the theology of the text in a variety of ways. The primary reason for lifting the event of Day 4 to the main event-line (rather than marking it grammatically as a temporal overlay) and shaping the account after the pattern of a week is clearly the sabbatical theology of the text. The theology of the Sabbath is certainly central to the theology of Gen 1:1-2:3. In his self-published work, "Kingdom Prologue," Meredith G. Kline spells out the sabbatical theology of Gen 1:1-2:3 and its relation to the parallel arrangements of Days 1 through 3 and Days 4 through 6.⁵¹ He also articulates the sabbatical theology of Gen 1:1-2:3 in his recent article.⁵² Here I

founding of the earth and the separation of the seas and dry land. Job 38-39 should give us all pause, if we think we fully comprehend God's ways at the time of creation.

⁴⁹ Buth, "Collision," 147.

⁵⁰ The objection that supernatural light (e.g., the light of God's glory as in Rev 21:5) is in view in Days 1 through 3 has been adequately countered by Kline's argument that such an interpretation "distorts the eschatological design of creation history, according to which the advent of God's Glory as the source of illumination that does away with need for the sun awaits the Consummation" ("Space," 9); see footnote 30 where Kline points out that in the consummation there will be light from the Glory and not from the sun, but that this is also joined with the absence of night, a situation that clearly does not pertain to Days 1 through 3, thus undermining the attempt to use Rev 22:5 to explain the light without luminaries of Days 1 through 3.

⁵¹ Meredith G. Kline, "Kingdom Prologue," 26-32; see also Hart, "Prologue," 315-16, 324-30.

⁵² Kline, "Space," 10-11.

want on focus on a different but vitally important aspect of the text's theology by answering the question, "Why the concern with rain and the resultant vegetation that people eat?"

Who is the presumed original reader of Genesis 1–2? Assuming a late date of composition, many read Genesis 1 against the backdrop of Mesopotamian religion with a presumed post-exilic reader in view. Genesis 1 is consequently read as a theological polemic against Mesopotamian religion. What difference for the theology of the text would it make, if we presume the original reader to be a pre-exilic Israelite and the polemic to be against Canaanite religion?

The dominant religious threat for pre-exilic Israel was Baalism. "The agrarian peoples of the ancient Middle East were acutely aware of the most basic equation: water = life." So water played a major role in the theologies of ancient Near Eastern peoples. Canaan, however, was not like Egypt or Mesopotamia, where agriculture was based on irrigation from rivers. Canaan was a land where agriculture was dependent on rain,

The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden. But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven (Deut 11:10–11).

Canaanite religion was consequently not concerned with river gods, as were the religions of Mesopotamia and Egypt. The primary god of the Canaanites was Baal, "the rider on

⁵³ I am not the first to suggest a Canaanite background for Genesis 1–2. In *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), John Day read Genesis 1 as a demythologized Canaanite *Chaoskampf*: "In so far as *tehom*'s mythological background is concerned this is not Babylonian at all, but rather Canaanite . . ." (50) and "The wind of Gen 1:2 derives ultimately from the wind of Baal employed against the sea monster" (53). In "The Canaanite Background of Gen I-III," *VT* 10 (1960), F. F. Hvidberg said, "At the back of the narrative is the prophet's struggle against baal. It is against him the story fights" (286) and "My aim has been to call attention to what they [Gen 1 and 2] have in common: a glimpse of the life-and-death struggle with Baal of the Canaanites for the soul of Israel" (294). In "Interpreting the Creation and Fall Story in Gen 2–3," *ZAW* 93 (1981), N. Wyatt said, "We may then accept F. F. Hvidberg's general theory that the story is intended as a polemic against Canaanite religion, with the proviso that it is the cult of El and Asherah and not that of baal which is attacked" (19).

⁵⁴ John Day, "Baal," in David Noel Freedman, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols., New York: Double Day, 1992) 1.547.

⁵⁵ Fred E. Woods, *Water and Storm Polemics Against Baalism in the Deuteronomic History* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994).

⁵⁶ Yehuda Karmon, *Israel: A Regional Geography* (London: John Wiley & Sons, 1971), 27, says of Israel, "Rainfall is the decisive climatic factor in the physical existence of population and for plant life and agriculture."

⁵⁷ Woods, *Water, 1*, suggests that the unpredictable nature of the Tigris and Euphrates over against the predictability of the Nile helps to explain some of the fundamental differences between Mesopotamian and Egyptian religion.

the clouds,” the storm god whose rain was considered absolutely necessary for the growth of crops and hence for life itself.

When the Hebrew tribes left the stable environment of Egypt and headed toward the land of Canaan, they encountered a people who worshipped the storm god called Baal and his retinue. Such an encounter created a culture conflict. Israel had been led by Yahweh through the sea and the desert, but as she entered the new land, Israel asked, “Was Yahweh also the god of Canaan?” As the Israelites settled in Canaan, they were tempted to ask their Canaanite neighbors, “How does your garden grow?” Such inquiry was seen by later writers as having led to eventual apostasy and exile as Israel became idolatrous and eventually drowned in Baalism.

This struggle against Baalism is part of the fabric of Genesis through Kings. The contest on Mt. Carmel brought this struggle into sharp relief. The alternatives were clear: “If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him” (1 Kgs 18:21). The means of determination was clear: “The god who answers by fire—he is God” (1 Kgs 18:24). When Baal failed to answer by fire and the Lord sent fire from heaven, the conclusion was clear: “The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!” (1 Kgs 18:39).

But this contest was not about which deity controlled fire. The issue at hand was, “Who controls the rain?” The struggle began with Elijah’s words,

As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word (1 Kgs 17:1).

And the struggle ended when the Lord God of Israel sent rain,

The sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain came on. . . .
(1 Kgs 18:45).

The polemic against Baalism is at the heart of OT covenant theology. Having quoted Deut 11:10–11 above, let me now quote those verses again in the context of a few of the verses that follow:

The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden. But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. It is a land the

⁵⁸ Day, “Baal,” 1.545, says that Baal “is clearly the most active and prominent of all the Canaanite deities . . . the great storm god: the fertility of the land depends on the rain this god supplies. . . .”

⁵⁹ Woods, *Water*, 2.

⁶⁰ Of his own book Woods, *Water*, 17, says, “this study will demonstrate that the Deuteronomic History supplied the Israelites with polemical literary material, especially dealing with water and storm, in order to fight Baalism rather than to conform to it.”

LORD your God cares for; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end. So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the LORD your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul—*then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and oil.* I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied. Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. Then the LORD's anger will burn against you, and he will shut the heavens *so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce*, and you will soon perish from the good land the LORD is giving you (Deut 11:10-17; emphasis added).

The land of Canaan was not a land that just "naturally" drank in rain from the sky. It was a land that drank in rain from heaven because YHWH Israel's God, cared for the land. Covenant loyalty to YHWH would result in rain, vegetation, and life. Worshiping other gods would result in no rain, no produce, and death. Now, what god in particular would Israel have been tempted to turn to with a view to procuring rain and the resultant vegetation? Baal, of course.

Reading the OT, it becomes clear that it was the Baal cult that provided the greatest and most enduring threat to the development of exclusive Yahweh worship within ancient Israel. The fact that the Israelites were settled among the Canaanites, for whom the worship of Baal was so important, and that Palestine is a land utterly dependent for its fertility upon the rain, accounts for the tempting nature of this cult as well as the strength of the OT polemic against it.⁶¹

The ubiquitous threat of Baalism provides the theological context in which Genesis 1-2 is to be read.

Genesis 1-2 proclaims that YHWH, the God of Israel, is the Lord of the rain, the resultant vegetation, and life. This central aspect of the message of Genesis 1-2 is embedded in the structure of the accounts. Why the two-fold focus on vegetation and the people that live on that vegetation? Why even bring into consideration the lack of vegetation owing to a lack of rain? Is this simply geographical decoration?

No, for the Book of Genesis serves as the prologue to the history of Israel.⁶² Genesis makes the point that the God of the nation of Israel is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 12-50), and that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the Creator of the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1-11). The God of Israel is the Creator. From the beginning the God of Israel, not Baal, has been the provider of the rain that is the prerequisite of life. *YHWH God of Israel has been the Lord of the rain from the beginning!* Redemptive theology, as exemplified in texts like Deut 11:10-17 and 1 Kings 17-18, is rooted in the creation theology of Genesis 1-2. Redemption is rooted in creation. YHWH God of Israel claims to be the true and living

⁶¹ Day, "Baal," 1.547.

⁶⁶ Youngblood, *Genesis*, 10-11.

God, the God whom Israel must serve to the exclusion of all rival deities, Baal in particular. This claim is most deeply rooted in the fact that YHWH God of Israel created all things by his powerful word (Ps 33:6), including the sending of the very first rains in the beginning, and has ever since sustained all things by his powerful word (Heb 1:3), including the sending of all rains subsequent to the beginning.

V. Conclusion

One central aspect of the kerygmatic message of Genesis 1-2 is now clear: Not Baal but "*The LORD he is God! The LORD he is God!*" This is true simply *because it had rained.*⁶³

⁶³ With this article I wish as a student and colleague to express my appreciation to Dr. Kline for the scholarly service he has rendered and continues to render to the Church.

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1890.]

Primeval Chronology.

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ARTICLE VII.
PRIMEVAL CHRONOLOGY.BY THE REV. PROFESSOR WILLIAM HENRY GREEN, D. D.,
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THE question of the possible reconciliation of the results of scientific inquiry respecting the antiquity of man and the age of the world with the Scripture chronology has been long and earnestly debated. On the one hand, scientists, deeming them irreconcilable, have been led to distrust the divine authority of the Scriptures; and, on the other hand, believers in the divine word have been led to look upon the investigations of science with an unfriendly eye, as though they were antagonistic to religious faith. In my reply to Bishop Colenso in 1863, I had occasion to examine the method and structure of the biblical genealogies, and incidentally ventured the remark¹ that herein lay the solution of the whole matter. I said: "There is an element of uncertainty in a computation of time which rests upon genealogies, as the sacred chronology so largely does. Who is to certify us that the antediluvian and ante-Abrahamic genealogies have not been condensed in the same manner as the post-Abrahamic? Our current chronology is based upon the *prima facie* impression of these genealogies. But if these recently discovered indications of the antiquity of man, over which scientific circles are now so excited, shall, when carefully inspected and thoroughly weighed, demonstrate all that any have imagined they might demonstrate, what then? They will simply show that the popular

¹ The Pentateuch Vindicated from the Aspersions of Bishop Colenso, p. 128 footnote.

chronology is based upon a wrong interpretation, and that, a select and partial register of ante-Abrahamic names has been mistaken for a complete one."

I here repeat, the discussion of the biblical genealogies above referred to, and add some further considerations which seem to me to justify the belief that the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 were not intended to be used, and cannot properly be used, for the construction of a chronology.

It can scarcely be necessary to adduce proof to one who has even a superficial acquaintance with the genealogies of the Bible, that these are frequently abbreviated by the omission of unimportant names. In fact, abridgment is the general rule, induced by the indisposition of the sacred writers to encumber their pages with more names than were necessary for their immediate purpose. This is so constantly the case, and the reason for it so obvious, that the occurrence of it need create no surprise anywhere, and we are at liberty to suppose it whenever anything in the circumstances of the case favors that belief.

The omissions in the genealogy of our Lord as given in Matthew 1 are familiar to all. Thus in verse 8 three names are dropped between Joram and Ozias (Uzziah), viz., Ahaziah (2 Kings 8:25), Joash (2 Kings 12:1), and Amaziah (2 Kings 14:1); and in verse 11 Jehoiakim is omitted after Josiah (2 Kings 23:34; 1 Chron. 3:16); and in verse 1 the entire genealogy is summed up in two steps, "Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

Other instances abound elsewhere; we mention only a few of the most striking. In 1 Chronicles 26:24 we read in a list of appointments made by King David (see 1 Chron. 24:3; 25:1; 26:26), that Shebuel,¹ the son of Gershon, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures; and again in 1 Chronicles 23:15, 16, we find it written, "The sons of Moses were Gershon and Eliezer. Of the sons of Gershon, Shebuel was the chief." Now it is absurd to suppose that the author of Chronicles was so grossly ignorant as to suppose that the grandson of Moses could

¹ He is called in 1 Cron. 24:20 a son of Amram, the ancestor of Moses; for Shubael and Shebuel are in all probability mere orthographic variations of the same name.

be living in the reign of David, and appointed by him to a responsible office. Again, in the same connection (1 Chron. 26:31), we read that "among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief;" and this Jerijah, or Jeriah (for the names are identical), was, according to 23:19, the first of the sons of Hebron, and Hebron was (v. 12) the son of Kohath, the son of Levi (v. 6). So that if no contraction in the genealogical lists is allowed, we have the great-grandson of Levi holding a prominent office in the reign of David.

The genealogy of Ezra is recorded in the book which bears his name; but we learn from another passage, in which the same line of descent is given, that it has been abridged by the omission of six consecutive names. This will appear from the following comparison, viz.:

1 Chronicles 6:3-14	Ezra 7:1-5
1. Aaron	Aaron
2. Eleazar	Eleazar
3. Phinehas	Phinehas
4. Abishua	Abishua
5. Bukki	Bukki
6. Uzzi	Uzzi
7. Zerahiah	Zerahiah
8. Meraioth	Meraioth
9. Amariah	
10. Ahitub	
11. Zadok	
12. Ahimaaz	
13. Azariah	
14. Johanan	
15. Azariah	Azariah
16. Amariah	Amariah
17. Ahitub	Ahitub
18. Zadok	Zadok
19. Shallum	Shallum
20. Hilkiah	Hilkiah
21. Azariah	Azariah
22. Seraiah	Seraiah
Ezra	

Still further, Ezra relates (viii. 1, 2): --

"These are now the chief of their fathers, and this is the genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king. Of the sons of Phinehas, Gershom. Of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel. Of the sons of David, Hattush."

Here, if no abridgment of the genealogy is allowed, we should have a great-grandson and a grandson of Aaron, and a son of David coming up with Ezra from Babylon after the captivity.

This disposition to abbreviate genealogies by the omission of whatever is unessential to the immediate purpose of the writer is shown by still more remarkable reductions than those which we have been considering. Persons of different degrees of relationship are sometimes thrown together under a common title descriptive of the majority, and all words of explanation, even those which seem essential to the sense, are rigorously excluded, the supplying of these chasms being left to the independent knowledge of the reader. Hence several passages in the genealogies of Chronicles have now become hopelessly obscure. They may have been intelligible enough to contemporaries; but for those who have no extraneous sources of information, the key to their explanation is wanting.

In other cases we are able to understand them, because the information necessary to make them intelligible is supplied from parallel passages of Scripture. Thus the opening verses of Chronicles contain the following bald list of names without a word of explanation, viz.: Adam, Seth, Enosh; Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared; Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech; Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

We are not told who these persons are, how they were related to each other, or whether they were related. The writer presumes that his readers have the book of Genesis in their hands, and that the simple mention of these names in their order will be sufficient to remind them that the first ten trace the line of descent from father to

son from the first to the second great progenitor of mankind; and that the last three are brothers, although nothing is said to indicate that their relationship is different from the preceding.

Again the family of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, is spoken of in the following terms in 1 Chron. i. 36: "The sons of Eliphaz: Teman and Omar, Zephi and Gatam, Kenaz and Timna, and Amalek."

Now, by turning to Genesis xxxvi. 11, 12, we shall see that the first five are sons of Eliphaz, and the sixth his concubine, who was the mother of the seventh. This is so plainly written in Genesis that the author of the Chronicles, were he the most inveterate blunderer, could not have mistaken it. But trusting to the knowledge of his readers to supply the omission, he leaves out the statement respecting Eliphaz's concubine, but at the same time connects her name and that of her son with the family to which they belong, and this though he was professedly giving a statement of the sons of Eliphaz.

So, likewise, in the pedigree of Samuel (or Shemuel, ver. 33, the difference in orthography is due to our translators, and is not in the original), which is given in 1 Chron. vi. in both an ascending and descending series. Thus in verses 22-24: "The sons of Kohath; Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son; Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son; Tahath his son," etc.

The extent to which the framer of this list has studied comprehensiveness and conciseness will appear from the fact, which no one would suspect unless informed from other source, that while the general law which prevails in it is that of descent from father to son, the third, fourth, and fifth names represent brothers. This is shown by a comparison of Ex. vi. 24, and the parallel genealogy, 1 Chron. vi. 36, 37, 50 that the true line of descent is the following, viz.: --

In ver. 22-24-Kohath

Amminadab

Korah

Assir, Elkanah, Ebiasaph

Assir

Tahath, etc.

In ver. 37-38-Kohath

Izbar

Korah

Ebiasaph

Assir

Tahath, etc.

The circumstance that the son of Kohath is called in one list Amminadab, and in the other Izhar, is no real discrepancy and can create no embarrassment, since it is no unusual thing for the same person to have two names. Witness Abram and Abraham; Jacob and Israel; Joseph and Zaphenath-paneah, Gen. xli. 45, Hoshea, Jehoshua, Num. xiii. 16 (or Joshua) and Jeshua, Neh. viii. 17, Gideon and Jerubbaal, Judg. vi. 32, Solomon and Jedidiah, 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25, Azariah and Uzziah, 2 Kings xv. I, 13, Daniel and Belteshazzar, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah and Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Dan. i. 7; Saul and Paul, Thomas and Didymus, Cephas and Peter, and in profane history Cyaxares and Darius, Octavianus and Augustus, Napoleon and Bonaparte, Ferretti and Pius IX.

The genealogy of Moses and Aaron is thus stated in the sixth chapter of Exodus: --

Ver. 16. "And these are the names of the sons of Levi, according to their generations; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari: and the years of the life of Levi were an hundred and thirty and seven years."

17. "The sons of Gershon"

18. "And the sons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel; and the years of the life of Kohath were an hundred and thirty and three years."

19. "And the sons of Merari"

20. "And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and the years of the life of Amram were an hundred and thirty and seven years."

21. "And the sons of Izhar"

22. "And the sons of Uzziel"

There is abundant proof that this genealogy has been condensed, as we have already seen that so many others have been, by the dropping of some of the less important names.

This is afforded, in the first place, by parallel genealogies of the same period; as that of Bezaleel (I Chron. ii. 18-20), which records seven generations from Jacob; and that of Joshua (I Chron. vii. 23-27), which records eleven. Now it is scarcely conceivable that there should be eleven links in the line of descent from Jacob to Joshua, and only four from Jacob to Moses.

A still more convincing proof is yielded by Num. iii. 19, 27, 28, from which it appears that the four sons of Kohath severally gave rise to the families of the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites; and that the number of the male members of these families of a month old and upward was 8,600 one year after the Exodus. So that, if no abridgment has taken place in the genealogy, the grandfather of Moses had, in the lifetime of the latter, 8,600 descendants of the male sex alone, 2,750 of them being between the ages of thirty and fifty (Num. iv. 36).

Another proof equally convincing is to be found in the fact that Levi's son Kohath was born before the descent into Egypt (Gen. xlvi. 11); and the abode of the children of Israel in Egypt continued 430 years (Ex. xii. 40, 41). Now as Moses was eighty years old at the Exodus (Ex. vii. 7) he must have been born more, than 350 years after Kohath, who consequently could not have been his own grandfather.

This genealogy, whose abbreviated character is so clearly established, is of special importance for the immediate purpose of this paper, because it might appear, at first sight, as though such an assumption was precluded in the present instance, and as though the letter of Scripture shut us up to the inevitable conclusion that there were

four links, and no more, from Jacob to Moses. The names which are found without deviation in all the genealogies are Jacob, Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses (Ex. vi. 16-20; Num. iii. 17-19; xxvi. 57-59; I Chron. vi. 1-3, 16-18; xxiii. 6, 12, 13). Now unquestionably Levi was Jacob's own son. So likewise Kohath was the son of Levi (Gen. xlvi. 11) and born before the descent into Egypt. Amram also was the immediate descendant of Kohath. It does not seem possible, as Kurtz proposed, to insert the missing links between them. For, in the first place, according to Num. xxvi. 59, "The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom her mother bare to Levi in Egypt," this Jochebed being (Ex. vi. 20) Amram's aunt, or his father's sister. Now, it is true, that "a daughter of Levi" might have the general sense of a descendant of Levi, as the woman healed by our Lord (Luke xiii. 16) is called "a daughter of Abraham;" and her being born to Levi might simply mean that she sprang from him (comp. Gen. xlvi. 25).

But these expressions must here be taken in a strict sense, and Jochebed accordingly must have been Levi's own daughter and the sister of Kohath, who must in consequence have been Amram's own father. This appears from a second consideration, viz., that Amram was (Num. iii. 27) the father of one of the subdivisions of the Kohathites, these subdivisions springing from Kohath's own children and comprising together 8,600 male descendants. Moses' father surely could not have been the ancestor of one-fourth of this number in Moses' own days.

To avoid this difficulty Tiele and Keil assume that there were two Amrams, one the son of Kohath, another the father of Moses, who was a more remote descendant but bore the same name with his ancestor. This relieves the embarrassment created by the Amramites (Num. iii. 27) but is still liable to that which arises from making Jochebed the mother of Moses. And further, the structure of

the genealogy in Ex. vi. is such as to make this hypothesis unnatural and improbable. Verse 16 names the three sons of Levi, Gershom, Kohath, and Merari; ver. 17-19, the sons of each in their order; ver. 20-22, the children of Kohath's sons; ver. 23, 24, contain descendants of the next generation, and ver. 25 the generation next following. Now, according to the view of Tiele and Keil, we must either suppose that the Amram, Izhar, and Uzziel of ver. 20-22 are all different from the Amram, Izhar, and Uzziel of ver. 18, or else that Amram, though belonging to a later generation than Izhar and Uzziel, is introduced before them, which the regular structure of the genealogy forbids; and besides, the sons of Izhar and the sons of Uzziel, who are here named, were the contemporaries of Moses and Aaron the sons of Amram (Num. xvi. 1; Lev. x. 4).

This subject may be relieved from all perplexity, however, by observing that Amram and Jochebed were not the immediate parents, but the ancestors of Aaron and Moses. How many generations may have intervened, we cannot tell. It is indeed said (Ex. vi. 20; Num. xxvi. 59), that Jochebed bare them to Amram. But in the language of the genealogies this simply means that they were descended from her and from Amram. Thus, in Gen. xlv. 18, after recording the sons of Zilpah, her grandsons, and her great-grandsons, the writer adds, "These are the sons of Zilpah and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls." The same thing recurs in the case of Bilhah (ver. 25): "She bare these unto Jacob; all the souls were seven." (Comp. also ver. 15, 22.) No one can pretend here that the author of this register did not use the terms understandingly of descendants beyond the first generation. In like manner, according to Matt. i. 11, Josias begat his grandson Jechonias, and ver. 8, Joram begat his great-great-grandson Ozias. And in Gen. x. 15-18 Canaan, the grandson of Noah, is said to have

begotten several whole nations, the Jebusite, the Amorite, the Girgasite, the Hivite, etc. (Comp. also Gen. xxv. 23; Deut. iv. 25; 2 Kings xx. 18; Isa, li, 2.)

Nothing can be plainer, therefore, than that, in the usage of the Bible, "to bear" and "to beget" are used in a wide sense to indicate descent, without restriction to the immediate offspring.¹

It is no serious objection to this view of the case that in Lev. x.4 Uzziel, Amram's brother, is called "the uncle of Aaron." The Hebrew word here rendered "uncle," though often specifically applied to a definite degree of relationship, has, both from etymology and usage, a much wider sense. A great-great-grand-uncle is still an uncle, and would properly be described by the term here used. It may also be observed that in the actual history of the birth of Moses his parents are not called Amram and Jochebed. It is simply said (Ex. ii. 1), "and there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi."

After these preliminary observations, which were originally drawn up for another purpose, I come to the more immediate design of the present paper, by proceeding to inquire, whether the genealogies of Gen. v. and xi. are necessarily to be considered as complete, and embracing all the links in the line of descent from Adam to Noah and from Shem to Abraham. And upon this I remark --

1. That the analogy of Scripture genealogies is decidedly against such a supposition. In numerous other instances there is incontrovertible evidence of more or less abridgment. This may even be the case where various

¹ In Ruth iv, 17 Ruth's child is called "a son born to Naomi," who was Ruth's mother-in-law and not even an ancestor of the child in the strict sense. Zerubbahel is called familiarly the son of Shealtiel (Ezr, iii 2; Hag. i. 1), and is so stated to be in the genealogies of both Matt. i. 12 and Luke iii. 27, though in reality he was his nephew (1 Chron. iii. 17-19). That descent as reckoned in genealogies is not always that of actual parentage appears from the comparison of the ancestry of our Lord as given by Matthew and by Luke.

circumstances combine to produce a different impression at the outset. Nevertheless, we have seen that this first impression, may be dissipated by a more careful examination and a comparison of collateral data. The result of our investigations thus far is sufficient to show that it is precarious to assume that any biblical genealogy is designed to be strictly continuous, unless it can be subjected to some external tests which prove it to be so. And it is to be observed that the Scriptures furnish no collateral information whatever respecting the period covered by the genealogies now in question. The creation, the Flood, the call of Abraham, are great facts, which stand out distinctly in primeval sacred history. A few incidents respecting our first parents and their sons Cain and Abel are recorded. Then there is an almost total blank until the Flood, with nothing whatever to fill the gap, and nothing to suggest the length of time intervening but what is found in the genealogy stretching between these two points. And the case is substantially the same from the Flood to Abraham. So far as the biblical records go, we are left not only without adequate data, but without any data whatever, which can be brought into comparison with these genealogies for the sake of testing their continuity and completeness.

If, therefore, any really trustworthy data can be gathered from any source whatever, from any realm of scientific or antiquarian research, which can be brought into comparison with these genealogies for the sake of determining the question, whether they have noted every link in the chain of descent, or whether, as in other manifest instances, links have been omitted, such data should be welcomed and the comparison fearlessly made. Science would simply perform the office, in this instance, which information gathered from other parts of Scripture is unhesitatingly allowed to do in regard to those genealogies previously examined.

And it may be worth noting here that a single particular in which a comparison may be instituted between the primeval history of man and Gen. v., suggests especial caution before affirming the absolute completeness of the latter. The letter of the genealogical record (v. 3) if we were dependent on it alone, might naturally lead us to infer that Seth was Adam's first child. But we know from chapter iv. that he had already had two sons, Cain and Abel, and from iv. 17 that he must have had a daughter, and from iv. 14 that he had probably had several sons and daughters, whose families had swollen to a considerable number before Adam's one hundred and thirtieth year, in which Seth was born. Yet of all this the genealogy gives us no inkling.

2. Is there not, however, a peculiarity in the construction of these genealogies which forbids our applying to them an inference drawn from others not so constructed? The fact that each member of the series is said to have begotten the one next succeeding, is, in the light of the wide use of this term which we have discovered in other cases, no evidence of itself that links have not been omitted. But do not the chronological statements introduced into these genealogies oblige us to regard them as necessarily continuous? Why should the author be so particular to state, in every case, with unfailing regularity, the age of each patriarch at the birth of his son, unless it was his design thus to construct a chronology of this entire period, and to afford his readers the necessary elements for a computation of the interval from the creation to the deluge and from the deluge to Abraham? And if this was his design, he must of course have aimed to make his list complete. The omission of even a single name would create an error.

But are we really justified in supposing that the author of these genealogies entertained such a purpose? It is a noticeable fact that he never puts them to such a use him-

self. He nowhere sums these numbers, nor suggests their summation. No chronological statement is deduced from these genealogies, either by him or by any inspired writer. There is no computation anywhere in Scripture of the time that elapsed from the creation or from the deluge, as there is from the descent into Egypt to the Exodus (Ex. xii. 40), or from the Exodus to the building of the temple (I Kings vi. 1). And if the numbers in these genealogies are for the sake of constructing a chronology, why are numbers introduced which have no possible relation to such a purpose? Why are we told how long each patriarch lived after the birth of his son, and what was the entire length of his life? These numbers are given with the same regularity as the age of each at the birth of his son; and they are of no use in making up a chronology of the period. They merely afford us a conspectus of individual lives. And for this reason doubtless they are recorded. They exhibit in these selected examples the original term of human life. They show what it was in the ages before the Flood. They show how it was afterwards individually narrowed down. But in order to this it was not necessary that every individual should be named in the line from Adam to Noah and from Noah to Abraham, nor anything approaching it. A series of specimen lives, with the appropriate numbers attached, was all that was required. And, so far as appears, this is all that has been furnished us. And if this be the case, the notion of basing a chronological computation upon these genealogies is a fundamental mistake. It is putting them to a purpose that they were not designed to subserve, and to which from the method of their construction they are not adapted. When it is said, for example, that "Enosh lived ninety years and begat Kenan," the well-established usage of the word "begat" makes this statement equally true and equally accordant with analogy, whether Kenan was an immediate or a remote descendant of Enosh; wheth-

er Kenan was himself born, when Enosh was ninety years of age or one was born from whom Kenan sprang. These genealogies may yield us the minimum length of time that it is possible to accept for the period that they cover; but they can make no account of the duration represented by the names that have been dropped from the register, as needless for the author's particular purpose.

3. The abode of the children of Israel in Egypt affords for our present purpose the best Scripture parallel to the periods now under consideration. The greater part of this term of 430 years is left blank in the sacred history. A few incidents are mentioned at the beginning connected with the descent of Jacob and his family into Egypt and their settlement there. And at its close mention is made of some incidents in the life of Moses and the events leading to the Exodus. But with these exceptions no account is given of this long period. The interval is only bridged by a genealogy extending from Levi to Moses and Aaron and their contemporaries among their immediate relatives (Ex. vi. 16-26). This genealogy records the length of each man's life in the principal line of descent, viz., Levi (ver. 16), Kohath (ver. 18), Amram (ver. 20). The correspondence in the points just indicated with the genealogies of Gen. v. and xi., and the periods which they cover, is certainly remarkable. And as they proceeded from the same pen, we may fairly infer from the similarity of construction a similarity of design. Now it has been shown already that the genealogy from Levi to Moses cannot have recorded all the links in that line of descent, and that it could not, therefore, have been intended to be used as a basis of chronological computation. This is rendered absolutely certain by the explicit statement in Ex. xii. 40. It further appears from the fact that the numbers given in this genealogy exhibit the longevity of the patriarchs named, but cannot be so concatenated as to sum up the entire period; thus suggesting the inference that the

numbers in the other genealogies, with which we are now concerned, were given with a like design, and not with the view of enabling the reader to construct the chronology.

4. In so far as a valid argument can be drawn from the civilization of Egypt, its monuments and records, to show that the interval between the deluge and the call of Abraham must have been greater than that yielded by the genealogy in Gen. xi., the argument is equally valid against the assumption that this genealogy was intended to supply the elements for a chronological computation.

For altogether apart from his inspiration Moses could not have made a mistake here. He was brought up at the court of Pharaoh, and was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, of which his legislation and the marvellous table of the affinities of nations in Gen. x., at once the admiration and the despair of ethnologists, furnish independent proof. He lived in the glorious period of the great Egyptian monarchy. Its monuments were then in their freshness and completeness. None of the irreparable damage, which time and ruthless barbarism have since wrought, had been suffered then. The fragmentary records, which scholars are now laboriously struggling to unravel and combine, with their numerous gaps and hopeless obscurities, were then in their integrity and well understood. Egypt's claim to a hoary antiquity was far better known to Moses, and he was in a position to gain a far more intelligent comprehension of it than is possible at present; for exuberant materials were ready at his hand, of which only a scanty and disordered remnant now survives. If, then, Egyptian antiquity contradicts the current chronology, it simply shows that this chronology is based upon an unfounded assumption. It rests upon a fundamentally mistaken interpretation of the ante-Abrahamic genealogy, and assigns a meaning to it which Moses could never have intended that it should have.

As is well known, the texts of the Septuagint and of the

Samaritan Pentateuch vary systematically from the Hebrew in both the genealogies of Gen. v. and xi. According to the chronologies based on these texts respectively, the interval between the Flood and the birth of Abraham was 292 (Hebrew), 942 (Samaritan), or 1172 years (Septuagint). Some have been disposed in this state of the case to adopt the chronology drawn from the Septuagint, as affording here the needed relief. But the superior accuracy of the Hebrew text in this instance, as well as generally elsewhere, can be incontrovertibly established. This resource, then, is a broken reed. It might, however, be plausibly imagined, and has in fact been maintained, that these changes were made by the Septuagint translators or others for the sake of accommodating the Mosaic narrative to the imperative demands of the accepted Egyptian antiquity. But if this be so, it is only a further confirmation of the argument already urged that the ante-Abrahamic genealogy cannot have been intended by Moses as a basis of chronological computation. He knew as much of the age of Egypt as the Septuagint translators or any in their day. And if so brief a term as this genealogy yields, was inadmissible in their judgment, and they felt constrained to enlarge it by the addition of nearly nine centuries is it not clear that Moses never could have intended that the genealogy should be so interpreted?

Furthermore, it seems to me worthy of consideration whether the original intent with which these textual changes were made, was after all a chronological one. The principle by which they are obviously and uniformly governed, is rather suggestive of a disposition to make a more symmetrical division of individual lives than to protract the entire period. The effect of these changes upon the chronology may have been altogether an afterthought.

Thus in the Hebrew text of Gen. v. the ages of different patriarchs at the birth of the son named are quite ir-

regular, and vary from sixty-five to one hundred and eighty-seven. But the versions seek to bring them into closer conformity, and to introduce something like a regular gradation. The Septuagint proceeds on the assumption that patriarchs of such enormous longevity should be nearly two centuries old at the birth of their son. Accordingly, when, in the Hebrew, they fall much below this standard, one hundred years are added to the number preceding the birth of the son and the same amount deducted from the number following his birth; the total length of each life is thus preserved without change, the proportion of its different parts alone being altered. The Samaritan, on the other hand, assumes a gradual diminution in the ages of successive patriarchs prior to the birth of their son, none rising to a century after the first two. When, therefore, the number in the Hebrew text exceeds one hundred, one hundred is deducted and the same amount added to the years after the son was born. In the case of Lamech the reduction is greater still, in order to effect the necessary diminution. Accordingly the years assigned to the several antediluvian patriarchs before the birth of their son in these several texts is as follows : --

	Hebrew.	Septuagint.	Samaritan.
Adam	130	230	230
Seth	105	205	105
Enosh	90	190	90
Kenan	70	170	70
Mahalalel	65	165	65
Jared	162	162	62
Enoch	65	165	65
		167 ¹	
Methuselah	187	187	67
Lamech	182	188	53
Noah	600	600	600

A simple glance at these numbers is sufficient to show that the Hebrew is the original, from which the others

¹ The number varies in different manuscripts.

diverge on the one side or the other, according to the principle which they have severally adopted. It likewise creates a strong presumption that the object contemplated in these changes was to make the lives more symmetrical, rather than to effect an alteration in the chronology.

5. The structure of the genealogies in Gen. v. and xi. also favors the belief that they do not register all the names in these respective lines of descent. Their regularity seems to indicate intentional arrangement. Each genealogy includes ten names, Noah being the tenth from Adam, and Terah the tenth from Noah. And each ends with a father having three sons, as is likewise the case with the Cainite genealogy (iv. 17-22). The Sethite genealogy (chap. v.) culminates in its seventh member, Enoch, who "walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." The Cainite genealogy also culminates in its seventh member, Lamech, with his polygamy, bloody revenge, and boastful arrogance. The genealogy descending from Shem divides evenly at its fifth member, Peleg; and "in his days was the earth divided." Now as the adjustment of the genealogy in Matt. i. into three periods of fourteen generations each is brought about by dropping the requisite number of names, it seems in the highest degree probable that the symmetry of these primitive genealogies is artificial rather than natural. It is much more likely that this definite number of names fitting into a regular scheme has been selected as sufficiently representing the periods to which they belong, than that all these striking numerical coincidences should have happened to occur in these successive instances.

It may further be added that if the genealogy in chap. xi. is complete, Peleg, who marks the entrance of a new period, died while all his ancestors from Noah onward were still living. Indeed Shem, Arphaxad, Selah, and Eber must all have outlived not only Peleg, but all the

generations following as far as and including Terah. The whole impression of the narrative in Abraham's days is that the Flood was an event long since past, and that the actors in it had passed away ages before. And yet if a chronology is to be constructed out of this genealogy, Noah was for fifty-eight years the contemporary of Abraham, and Shem actually survived him thirty-five years, provided xi. 26 is to be taken in its natural sense, that Abraham was born in Terah's seventieth year. This conclusion is well-nigh incredible. The calculation which leads to such a result, must proceed upon a wrong assumption.

On these various grounds we conclude that the Scriptures furnish no data for a chronological computation prior to the life of Abraham; and that the Mosaic records do not fix and were not intended to fix the precise date either of the Flood or of the creation of the world.

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